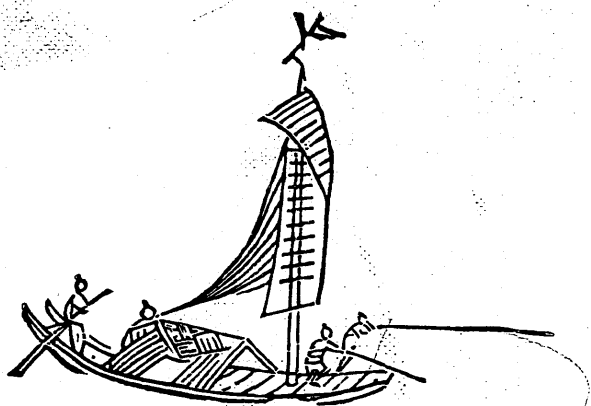
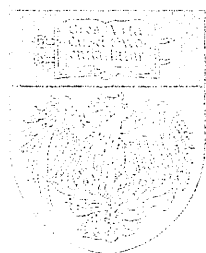




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Y E L L O W
R I V E R S
ADVENTURES IN A
CHINESE PARISH





YELLOW RIVERS

ADVENTURES IN A CHINESE PARISH

by
EARL
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||

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YELLOW RIVERS

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TO

MY CHINESE FRIENDS AND  
FELLOW WORKERS

THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED  
WITH AFFECTION AND HIGH  
REGARD



ACKNOWLEDGMENT IS MADE  
TO "ASIA MAGAZINE" AND  
THE "WORLD'S WORK" FOR  
PERMISSION TO USE CHAPTERS  
WHICH HAVE APPEARED IN  
THOSE PUBLICATIONS



# CONTENTS



|                                                     |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----|
| PROLOGUE                                            | xi  |
| I. DEMOCRACY AND THE DRAGON                         | I   |
| II. AN INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNING                       | 12  |
| III. THE BARBER AND THE FORTY GOOD-<br>FOR-NOTHINGS | 29  |
| IV. A DEAL IN DEATH-BEDS                            | 38  |
| V. THE DARKEST HOUR                                 | 49  |
| VI. THE VILLAGE AND THE WORLD OUT-<br>SIDE          | 54  |
| VII. THE EYE OF THE EAST                            | 68  |
| VIII. A MATTER OF BOUNDARIES                        | 73  |
| IX. THE LOAN OF A LAMP                              | 83  |
| X. A QUESTION OF FACE                               | 89  |
| XI. THE POWERS OF DARKNESS                          | 97  |
| XII. RIVAL CLANS                                    | 108 |
| XIII. THE CLAN THAT WOULD RULE                      | 124 |
| XIV. MONEY TALKS                                    | 136 |
| XV. NEW WORK, NEW WORRIES                           | 141 |
| XVI. TEN YEARS AFTER                                | 151 |



## PROLOGUE



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INNUMERABLE white sails dotted the long level reach of the river and were silhouetted against the purple mountains to the south. Great trees uplifted themselves at frequent intervals on all sides, with occasional thickets of bamboo and magnolias in crimson blossom. On a low hill on the opposite shore was a temple with wide, slow-curving eaves. Over all was poured the warm, brilliant sunshine.

A boat headed downstream against the wind was being sculled by two men who manipulated a long oar that vibrated slowly back and forth behind it like the tail of a veritable dragon. The rowers faced each other and moved with a regular rhythm, two steps forward and two steps back, two steps forward and two steps back. A larger boat, stuck on the ledge of a minor rapid, was surrounded by a swarm of men who heaved and laboured, and their shouting, together with the low musical roar of the rapid, made an island of clamour in the sunny tranquillity of the river.

A road that for a while paralleled the stream was filled with pedestrians in the universal blue attire, some strolling leisurely along, others, with bundles and baskets suspended from the ends of carrying-poles, hurrying with the quick, choppy gait of the carrying coolie. Ahead, a line of water-buffaloes, with wide, curving horns, was clumsily crossing the river at a deep ford.

Men and women were at work in fields the size of garden plots that abutted on the river: here one, pink with the bloom of a sort of clover which three men were turning under for fertilizer with vigorous swings



of their mattocks, leaving black loam behind them, yonder one of *yu tsai* with its tall thick stalks and sea of golden blossoms. And everywhere appeared the green of new grain.

A small boat, toiling upstream, came abreast of a little cove where a brook joined the river. Over the solitary American in the bow came a rush of memories. This was the place of business of a Burmese kingfisher, whom he had long ago learned to watch for at this point. Would he still be there after all these years? Yes, there he was on a branch above his particular pool, a point of brilliance with the sunlight glinting on emerald and turquoise. The traveller looked on him delighted. The bird gazed back, but made no sign of recognition. And in the marshy bend of the river, farther up, a flock of cranes kept the remembered rendezvous, and stalked solemnly back and forth.

It suddenly came over the traveller that many of his old friends would no longer be in Kan San to welcome his arrival. He thought how many had passed away. Of his old associates, Chinese or American, he would miss Yang Ling Mo the worst. And yet he knew that the work went on and increased—slowly, for he had learned to be suspicious of anything in China that went forward too rapidly.

Dusk came. At a busy village his boat tied up, together with many others side by side. There were pirates on the river. From the stern of each boat ascended a wisp of thin blue wood-smoke that blended into the mist from the stream.

Next morning the water was rising fast. The spring floods were on, and once more he was sailing yellow rivers. He noticed how the turbid current was already gnawing at the banks. His boat passed a village, half of which had disappeared into the stream during the years since he had seen it last.

It seemed to him that the rivers were a type of the

land of his adoption. Anciently, forests had controlled their beneficent flow. Now denuded slopes left floods unrestrained and yellow torrents spread menace and destruction. Only reforestation could again regulate the flow of waters.

On the uplands of history, where were the sources of Chinese life, great ancient forests still flourished. But in other areas there survived only the bleak remains of those social forces of custom and conservatism that had for centuries maintained the equilibrium of Chinese society. And now China was in confusion. Only by the long processes of planting and growth could the forces for the control of Chinese national life under modern conditions be developed, and the new spirit built up.

Here in Kan San he had had a hand in that deeper work of reforestation. Into it had gone some of the best years of his life. As he looked back on it he could begin to see how his labours, which had seemed so endless and often discouraging, fitted into a larger whole.



Y E L L O W  
R I V E R S  
ADVENTURES IN A  
CHINESE PARISH







## I. DEMOCRACY AND THE DRAGON

---

Democracy is the great new word in China, although much of its substance in one form or another has existed for a long time. The dragon has been a most cherished institution for forty centuries. When democracy meets dragon, particularly an ancient and deceitful dragon, then history is hot in the making and the end is not yet, or soon.

For instance, consider the things that befell Han Siensen, district magistrate of Kan San, in 1914, the fourth year of the republic.

Han Siensen had been educated in one of the new-style schools decreed by the Empress Dowager after the *débâcle* of the Boxer uprising in 1900. He was an affable, youngish man, with a soft smile, a slight knowledge of German, and an uncle in the *yamen* of the civil governor at the provincial capital. He wore a delicate mandarin moustache after the fashion of the defunct Manchu dynasty and had the modesty and courtesy of the old-fashioned Chinese scholar, yet his manner was

business-like and straightforward, as befitted an official of the new republican government. He was plain Sien-sen, mister, to every one, and preferred walking or going horseback to being borne in his green official sedan chair.

His district of Kan San was a small county in the far interior of China, whose boundaries followed closely those of an ancient petty kingdom, a river valley hemmed in by mountain barriers to the north and south. Outlying foothills rose abruptly from the level floor of the valley, pagoda-tipped, or crowned with the low, white buildings of Buddhist monasteries, half hidden amid great trees, which contrasted pleasantly with the bare slopes beneath. The countryside was thickly strewn with villages, and a vast population swarmed busily in the rice-fields, living peaceful and contented lives as their fathers had done before them for forty centuries. Through the midst of the valley flowed the Da Chee and its tributaries, wide, yellow rivers during the summer floods, jade rivulets in fall and winter, and almost surrounded the walls and gate towers of the little city of Kan San, the county seat.

The magistrate's *yamen* overlooked city and river and plain. It was made up of three main halls separated by shady, stone-paved courts, with his personal apartments and gardens in the rear. The innermost of the three was the great Hall of Justice, with its red judgment seat. At one side of this was the state reception-room, furnished with a long table covered with white bedspreads in the best foreign fashion, the centre of the decorative scheme being an eight-day clock. The middle hall contained the tax office, and servants and soldiers occupied the outer one with its great doors flanked by a small cannon commanding the open space between it and the great gate on the main street of the city.

Here generations of officials had reaped the rewards of a classical education and laid up much goods for many years, maintaining order, dealing out justice, and ex-

tracting the revenues, with a minimum of interference with local custom and prejudice and a maximum of profit and pleasure. Under the monarchy, the government of China, outside the capital city and the imperial court, had been carried on with extraordinarily few officials, the villages, of which the country is largely composed, being self-governing clan units, and the government taking a hand only when necessary.

The new democratic government, however, was to be for the people and by the people. It was therefore incumbent upon it to shepherd them into the unfamiliar paths of progress. Yet it was too easy to forget that the Chinese people had been going their way for four thousand years, disregarding changes of dynasty and absorbing foreign conquerors, and that the modernization of such a stock could not take place overnight. The group of reformers was far too small to man the whole machinery of government, and men of modern training were scarce, so that large numbers of officials of the old school had to be used, with the result that in many districts the methods and spirit of the old regime continued in use, and the change was in name only. Even in the case of new officials who sincerely worked for progress, the introduction of some of the most commonplace measures sometimes produced startling results.

Han Siensen was one of those who gave themselves most earnestly to acquiring experience in the art of governing, and particularly to the great problem of reform. At first all went well.

The Tsao Ling Dao band of robbers, which had long terrorized the region to the east, thought this a propitious time to revive an old feud with the village of Gang An. They descended upon it from their stronghold in the foothills, and when the night of fighting was over, four of the villagers were dead and many more wounded. Of the twenty-six houses in the village, all but seven were smouldering ruins, their smoke-black-



ened mud walls showing bleak in the early morning light.

The villagers hastened to put the matter before Han Siensen, who promptly mobilized half his force of sixty meek, yellow-uniformed soldiers of the new army, giving them strict orders in person. These, travelling by night, with a guide with a lantern and a mounted officer in the lead, stumbled in single file along the narrow, winding paths between the rice-fields, surprised the robbers before dawn, and captured them all.

The soldiers led the robbers forthwith to the city, without once offering them a chance to escape. This caused the robbers great scandal and surprise, for they had taken the precaution to bribe the first secretary, and could not understand how such things could be.

The Chinese have a shrewd custom whereby an official may hold office only outside his native province, where he will be free from his own family and clan influence. As a result he may sometimes scarcely understand the local dialect, and is of necessity dependent largely upon a local secretary for knowledge of conditions and the dispatch of all matters. The first secretary belonged to one of the leading families in Kan San, was credited with taking several times the "squeeze" that the magistrate did, and was held in correspondingly higher esteem by the populace. In fact, Han Siensen did not "squeeze" at all, but the people hardly could be expected to believe anything of the sort.

The greater part of the bribe had reached the pocket of the first secretary and he had promised immunity, but had not yet seen his way to corrupt his chief. He could save his face and his influence only by intervening on behalf of at least a portion of the gang. Being really an able man, he was only slightly embarrassed. Going to Han Siensen, he made a full breast of the matter, neglecting only to refer to any pecuniary consideration, and detailed with engaging candour how he had been led through family connections to give certain assur-

ances which had most unfortunately placed him in a false and difficult position. He made it merely a little matter between gentlemen, and explained that he would be considerably put out if the procedure of executing the whole band were adopted.

Han Siensen was not too inexperienced to read between the lines of his secretary's petition, or to realize the necessity of saving the face of a useful servant by granting at least a part of his request, but insisted on making an example of the leaders. Accordingly, one sunny June morning they were lined up outside the city wall and shot, in accordance with the new republican mode of execution, to the vast edification of the populace, who took a holiday and spoke well of the government and the new official, for the evil was of long standing. This popularity was to be of short duration.

The provincial government now decided on a school census. All departments had shared in the ferment of politics and political theory, but especially did the Bureau of Education feel a heavy responsibility for transmuting the "stupid people" of the old official proclamations into republican citizens. So Han Siensen received orders to carry out a school census in Kan San.

This was a commonplace of modern government and an apparently simple bit of routine, and plans were accordingly made to put it through. Poor relations, languishing "expectants," and office-seekers were gathered together, given a brief, sketchy training, and turned loose on the defenceless countryside.

They were not welcomed. To begin with, the mass of the Chinese people, themselves unable to read or write, have a reverence for the written word that amounts almost to a superstitious fear. They are restive at having things recorded concerning themselves which they cannot understand. They are doubtful and apprehensive as to the use to which such writings may

be put. Foreigners have gotten themselves stoned by taking notes.

Furthermore, the people had a suspicion of governmental activity. They were accustomed to a regime that concerned itself with the populace chiefly for its own ends, and otherwise left its subjects largely to themselves so long as all went well. They did not believe the talk about universal education. This wholesale listing of names portended bitterness on an unprecedented scale. There was no telling what the new government might not do. So, as the census went on, uneasiness and a sense of impending calamity heightened day by day.

Then a rumour started somewhere, and spread with the mysterious rapidity that outruns all ordinary means of communication. The names of the children were being collected in order to use their souls in strengthening the foundations of the proposed railway bridge over the Ho Kiang. The engineers had been in doubt as to the feasibility of constructing it, owing to the nature of the river bed. This difficulty was to be overcome by inscribing the names of the children upon tablets to be embedded in the foundation piers, whereupon the children would shortly die and their souls go to reside in their names, thus ensuring the lasting stability of the bridge. Be it said in passing that this superstition is common to both China and the West, and has frequently appeared in Europe until very recent times.

The rumour ran through the province like wildfire, and devastation followed in its train. Census-takers were roughly handled and fled. Schoolhouses were wrecked or given to the flames. Teachers went into retirement. The destruction was such that a quite considerable proportion of the schools in the province were unable to open that fall.

When reports of such doings in his district of Kan San were brought to him, Han Siensen was annoyed at having so much disturbance over so simple a matter. Superstition must not be allowed to upset the educa-

tional program of the government. In spite of all remonstrance, he called for his green official chair and went forth to enlighten and reassure the populace, or, if they proved obdurate, to arrest the ringleaders and strike the terror of the law into the countryside.

The villagers, however, were beyond any possibility of listening to reason. When Han Siensen insisted on carrying the census to completion they uprose in desperate defence of the lives of their children, and attacked him and his escort furiously, delivering a shower of blows with carrying-poles and other rustic weapons that scattered his soldiers, smashed his chair, and beat him to the ground. So fierce was the onslaught that his escort, rallying, had the greatest difficulty in rescuing him before he was beaten to death, and in effecting a hurried retreat.

Whereupon, returning unostentatiously to his *yamen*, the magistrate stayed close indoors, and the census lapsed into chaos.

During the course of these events a rainless spring had been succeeded by a summer of unprecedented drought. Those who cultivated the uplands and depended entirely upon rain saw the summer crop wither away. In the broad valleys, given over to rice-fields irrigated by mountain streams, first the higher tracts at the margins went dry, and then those at the lower levels, until only a trickle remained.

The villagers first besought, then threatened, and at length abused their idols. Still the drought continued. Then delegations began to come to the city to beseech the district magistrate, "the father and mother of the people," to take special measures to propitiate the great rain dragon, mover amid clouds, progenitor of storms, and father of yellow waters. Han Siensen would at first hear nothing of this. They were now living under the republic, in a new era of enlightenment, and all such old superstitions must be done away with. However,

deputations continued to arrive from the villages, and were more insistent and noisy each day. At length they became so numerous and desperate that all counselled immediate compliance as the only means of preventing an uprising on the part of the now thoroughly roused and exasperated populace. Finally, Han Siensen gave a reluctant consent.

The desired ceremony could be performed only by the District Magistrate, the representative of the Son of Heaven—that the emperor no longer ruled in Peking was a delicate point that all agreed in ignoring—and in the memory of man it had never been known to fail, particularly toward the end of a long dry spell.

Han Siensen put himself in the hands of the Taoist priests. His function was to do what he was told. The Tao Shih were masters of ceremonies. It was their day. Anticipating the great occasion, these adepts in the mysteries of wind and water were assembled and awaiting their cue. To the dignified and ascetic head priest of the city temple, with his grey-robed associates, was added the frowsy brotherhood who lived close to the Tao, or order of the universe, in mountain caves, shaping rocks into images for the edification of vulgar piety.

Following due ceremonies in the city, the procession started, the official retinue and head priests in chairs, the humbler brethren on foot. After two days they arrived in a mountain valley beyond the fantastic peaks of Ju Fung San, at a little lake which was the abode of the water dragon. Here the official was required to perform a vigil to concentrate the qualities of his vital spirit, fasting strictly for three days. The last night was spent in solemn supplication, with a clangorous accompaniment of gongs and chanting, and at dawn came the divine manifestation.

The belief was that, as the morning light broke, the object which first appeared on the surface of the lake, animate or inanimate, would be the incarnation of the

water dragon, which, when borne to the district temple and duly worshipped, would send rain.

As day dawned all watched vigilantly for whatever object might manifest the dread presence. No sign of life appeared.

At length there came to view something which, when brought to shore, turned out to be a small piece of charred wood. There was some doubt as to whether this could really be the desired incarnation, but, no more likely object appearing, it was formally declared to be so by the leading priests, and carried in state to the district temple in Kan San, where it received fitting honours. No mention, however, was made of the nature of the manifestation.

That night a fire broke out and, resisting the utmost effort of a willing but disorderly bucket brigade, swept a section of the city. The following day recourse was had to the temple of the virtuous fire god, to appease the wrath of that divinity and prevent a repetition of the disaster. Nevertheless, that night was enlivened by another considerable fire. The succeeding day was marked by such ceremonies as the ancient temple of the fire god had not witnessed in the memory of any living, all of which did not avail to prevent the occurrence of a third disastrous fire that very night.

The populace was frantic. Business was at a standstill. Delegations pouring in from the equally excited country districts complicated the confusion. One rumour after another swept up and down the narrow, crowded streets. Then a terrible report spread through the city, exceeding their worst fears. What their official had brought from Ju Fung San, which was even at that moment being worshipped and implored in the district temple, was a manifestation, not of the water dragon, but of the fire dragon. It was only a bit of charcoal. Had there not on previous occasions always been something native to the watery element, a frog or at least an

aquatic insect? Beyond doubt, half-burned wood betokened not rain but conflagration.

The wily fire dragon had tricked their magistrate. If only they had had an official of the old school who knew the ancient customs instead of this ignorant exponent of foreign democracy, this calamity would never have come upon them. A frantic, desperate mob began to surge down the narrow streets toward the *yamen*.

Within an inner court Han Siensen and his subordinates listened anxiously to the clamour outside. For some hours the reports brought in by the police had been increasingly alarming. Now the mob was upon them and was making a determined attack upon the great gate. They called to mind how the *yamen* of the prefect had been burned the year before the revolution when he had refused to stop the export of rice and avert a threatened famine.

The most experienced counselled immediate flight. Most of the underlings had already disappeared. The group waited with impatient dignity for Han Siensen to give the word.

The magistrate paid no heed to them. For the moment he was lost in thought. The ideals of reform which he had so earnestly cherished seemed somehow to lose their magic potency before the menace of the mob. His smattering of Western learning suddenly became a thing of naught. The uncle in the *yamen* of the civil governor seemed singularly remote from the present contingency. He remembered that, for all his republican theories, the governor had a keen way of judging men by results.

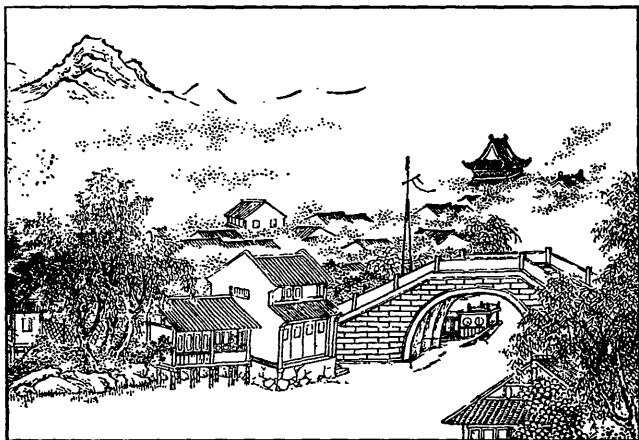
As his newer theories failed him his early training reasserted itself. He turned to the first secretary. "Have proclamation made to the stupid populace" (he was unconsciously dropping into the style of his monarchical predecessors in office) "that this deceitful dragon can be propitiated only by being escorted back with the

highest honours by the same official that brought him forth. The procession will start at noon."

The first secretary bowed profoundly, with a new look of respect in his eyes, and departed with dignity to put this coup into execution. The little group continued to wait in silence. After some time the noise in the street began to diminish, and at last died gradually away.

Han Siensen continued to be the district magistrate of Kan San for many years, but the tale of his adventures ends at this point. He was a good official, and none the less so for having finally come to the conclusion that the old customs and superstitions could not be done away with all at once, and that reform must follow the more prosaic path of gradual progress.





## II. AN INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNING

---

Sun Bei En, pastor of the city church in Kan San, had long boasted that, when he had to resign, his successor in the pastorate would have to pay him the sum of one hundred dollars.

Sun was a man of lowly origin and slight education, but of no mean ability. For over ten years he had been pastor of the important church in the district city where the missionaries resided, and was justly famed among the foreigners for an unctuous professional smirk, and among the academy students for his mannerism of wiping his nose on the back of his hand.

He was easily the best of the little group of preachers in the Kan San district, and had kept himself above those common and more obvious sins that had occasionally caused the dismissal of others. During their years of labour together a close bond had grown up between him and the missionary under whom he worked, as is very often the case in China, and the latter had gradually come to rely upon his judgment, and to see things

connected with the work among the churches largely through his eyes. From the foreign point of view the missionary was in charge. As the Chinese saw it, he was the benevolent representative of the foreign society that paid the bills, and the real authority was in the hands of Sun.

His advice largely determined who should be sent to the seminary, whose children should receive free tuition in the schools of the mission, and a host of minor matters of material interest to the constituency. People with favours to ask, or difficulties with which they wanted help, usually saw him first, and nothing in his upbringing or outlook on life fitted him to regard such opportunities arising out of his sacred office as otherwise than primarily for the benefit of himself and his friends.

His influence at length became so pernicious that the rest of the missionaries in the city repeatedly asked that he be dismissed, but the missionary in charge of the evangelistic work could never be brought to see it that way.

All this did not mean that Sun was not a sincere Christian according to his lights. Even after his dismissal later from the ministry, he continued to be an earnest worker in the church as long as he lived. But he was of a type not uncommon among men of ability in China, whether in the capital or in the remotest country village—a bully; not, however, the sort whose swagger and brute force are openly displayed, but the kind that depends on craft, moving darkly behind the scenes in the best Oriental fashion.

Nor did the members of the church see anything out of the way in his proposed sale of the pastorate. It was a little irregular, of course, but nothing heinous, provided always that he could get away with it.

At first, events were not propitious. The missionary in charge of evangelistic work broke down and returned to America. Sun was forced to resign and see a successor, whom he had no hand in choosing, installed in his place.

Even so, Sun's prestige continued almost unabated. It still remained to be seen whether he would not yet be more than a match for the earnest but inexperienced new missionary, John Chatfield, who had now succeeded to the direction of the work. No Chinese doubted that Sun would come out ahead. Even An Yu Lo, senior minister in the Kan San district and pastor of the church at Puko, self-important and supercilious scholar and degree man of the old school, far above Sun in the social scale, when asked to supply the church during the summer after Sun's resignation, requested time to consider the matter, and then went straight to Sun to inquire whether he had any objections.

Lan Sin Li, the new pastor, was a youth who had completed high school before taking his seminary course, and was of the type that was beginning to supersede the inadequately trained preachers that had been the only sort available during the earlier stage of mission work. He therefore had a far better understanding of what the missionaries were trying to accomplish, and was more in sympathy with their ideals than any of the older men, whether preachers or laymen. He was earnest, and while effective in the pulpit, was much less so outside of it, and had a self-conscious and overbearing demeanour that made enemies for him in spite of himself.

The members were divided as to whether this young successor to Sun should pay the one hundred dollars he expected. Lan had not sought the position, and it came to him in no way as a result of any influence of Sun's, so, although he knew of Sun's expectations, he saw no reason why he should contribute one hundred dollars, which would indeed amount to nearly a half of his year's salary.

Hence to Sun's natural feeling of resentment against the man who had supplanted him in his position was added the sting of injustice in being deprived of the money which he had come to look upon as his due. He

did not so greatly regret the loss of the pastorate, which he realized was inevitable, but he was unreconciled to the loss of the hundred dollars, and often consoled himself by imagining ways and means for yet obtaining it.

This was also a source of grief to Chen So Ling, the wealthiest and most prominent member of the church. Sun owed him one hundred dollars. Money-lending is a precarious proposition in China, for the creditor takes a long chance of never seeing his money again, which is one of the reasons why the normal interest rate is twenty per cent. Sun out of a job was a hopeless risk, so he was certain of Chen's hearty coöperation in any scheme that promised a financial return.

Of all of these complications the Reverend John Chatfield, the youthful and enthusiastic new missionary who had just arrived, was blissfully ignorant. He had a record for scholarship, a weak stomach, and a good opinion of himself which he modestly tried to conceal. He was energetic and had a genuine zeal for his calling. But he had never gotten the slightest intimation that the real test of his work would not be primarily the number of converts that he could make. Nor had he any idea of the struggle between the old and new going on in the church as everywhere else in China, or the danger that the new spirit might not fully gain the ascendancy, and the church be made use of by the unworthy elements in it for their own selfish ends.

Therefore, when he decided to bring Yang Ling Mo from the neighbouring district of Dingpu to replace the pastor at Lotien, who was being dropped, he had no notion whatever of the sort or extent of complications that might ensue.

"I plan to have him arrive early in the fall, and be appointed to Lotien by our new District Committee," he explained happily to his missionary colleagues.

"A man from Dingpu will be of no earthly use here," said the lady doctor, positively. "The dialect is entirely different."

With this all the others agreed. The new missionary was dismayed, but unable to dispute the superior knowledge of those with longer experience. Yet, he was convinced that the work was in need of new blood, and determined not to miss the rare opportunity of picking up a good man.

"Then I shall have him come at once and spend the summer in studying the language, the same as we missionaries have to."

"If you do, it will be over my protest," retorted the lady doctor.

A further difficulty immediately arose, for it proved impossible to rent a house for him. Accommodations are very hard to get in an interior Chinese city. It is seemingly simple matters such as this which are the despair of foreigners in China and which frequently, as in this case, have far-reaching consequences. The young American, however, in the innocence of his heart, hit on what seemed to him to be a very happy solution of the matter. Sun had been allowed to continue on in the parsonage for nearly a year after his resignation, until he could secure a place to his liking. He was now about to move out and make way for Lan to move in.

"Would you be willing," the new missionary enquired of Lan, "to continue to live with your father until fall, and let Yang temporarily occupy the parsonage?"

"Perfectly so," said Lan, cordially. "I am delighted that you are bringing him to Kan San. We were classmates and I want to do everything in my power to make him welcome."

Yang arrived in due season, and proved to be a most affable and courteous person, with a face that betrayed no sign of his keen intelligence, and a schoolboy manner that, for the first months of their acquaintance, kept the new missionary puzzled as to whether his seeming impudence was really intended or not. He dressed well, and his foreign-style hat and shoes were the last word

in the antique fashions that used to be dumped on the happily unsuspecting Oriental in the interior provinces. He and his bright-eyed little wife, who had studied in a mission school, made a place for themselves at once and made friends with every one.

Yang settled down in the parsonage to the study of the variety of Chinese current in Kan San. The missionaries departed to hills to escape the disease-bringing heat of the summer, and Sun, calling upon Chen, who set forth steaming cups of tea, fragrant with cassia, discoursed happily of plots and stratagems.

That was a troubled summer. Drought, crop failure, and the rioting resulting from the effort of the provincial government to put through a school census, put the province in an uproar, and among other rumours, John Chatfield began to hear that Lan and Yang were at swords' points, and that Yang was trying to run Lan out of the pastorate. This seemed so preposterous that he refused to believe it, feeling certain that it was either gossip pure and simple, or a misunderstanding that could be quickly cleared up by impartial investigation and straightforward dealing.

However, on his return, Yang came to him at once with a long story of ill-treatment by Lan, which had come to a climax when Lan had taken him to task publicly for interfering with his pastoral work, and the two had indulged in some punctiliously worded repartee which seemed not to have been inspired by brotherly love.

"I have not talked with Lan Siensen yet," the missionary told Yang, bluntly, after asking many questions, "but from your own account it seems to me that instead of studying the Kan San dialect you have been trying to supplant Lan Siensen in the pastorate of the city church."

"Indeed, you misunderstand the situation," expostulated Yang, earnestly.

"Then why have you done all the things you have just told me about, which were Lan Siensen's work and not yours?"

"Members of the church asked me to. A number of them want me to be their pastor. I have not sought the position, but if that should be the will of the church, I should be happy to accept."

"But what about Lan Siensen?" asked the perplexed missionary.

"If the members prefer me to Lan, I do not see how that is any fault of mine," said Yang, with great simplicity.

The real situation, however, was much more complicated than appeared on the surface. The mission had that year adopted a new plan of having the matters in each field relating to church work handled by a district committee made up of representatives of the various churches sitting with the missionary in charge, instead of by the missionary alone as had been the practice hitherto. This committee was to hold its first meeting that fall. One of the matters to come before it was the location of Yang Ling Mo, and the disposal of the present incumbent of the Lotien church. In order to have the new committee develop some real authority and be a genuine step toward self government, young Chatfield, as missionary in charge, had mistakenly thought it wise to refrain from making any statement as to what he had in mind as a final designation for Yang, stating only that it would come up at the meeting of the committee. This indefiniteness, however, had left an opening for conjecture, stratagem, and political manipulation, which Sun and his friends had not been slow to seize upon.

The new missionary expected Lan to come with his side of the story, but he maintained a dignified silence, and had to be sent for.

"I would not go so far as to say that he was trying

to take my place," said Lan in reply to John Chatfield's questions. "I fear that I may have been somewhat in the wrong also."

"Why then should he act as he has?"

"I think that he has been trying to make a good impression in a new place," said Lan, charitably.

More than this, young Chatfield could not get out of him, and finally came to much the same conclusion himself.

But, from the intensely pragmatic point of view of Sun and his friends, Yang was already as good as installed as pastor of the church, and Sun's one hundred dollars practically assured. Was Yang not living in the parsonage, thanks to the arrangement so kindly made by the new missionary? Was he not exercising pastoral oversight over the congregation and performing all the functions of the pastorate save conducting services, and even those in the case of the "beseech rain" meeting?

It only remained to get up a series of demonstrations which would bring things to a crisis and clinch the matter before the meeting of the committee.

The next Sunday, taking advantage of the absence of the missionary, who was visiting country churches, Sun and Chen assembled what they called a meeting of the church. This was held without previous notice or undue publicity and was composed of the friends of Sun and the enemies of Lan. They wasted considerable time owing to the fact that one of the missionaries from the girls' school happened in on them and they had to discuss ostensible business until she became hungry and went home for dinner. Then they got to work and voted unanimously to call Yang as pastor of the church.

They also formulated their case against Lan, one item of which was his alleged ineffectiveness in conducting service. It seemed that he was accustomed to read the Scripture from a pocket testament, whereas Chen in particular held that he ought to use the ponderous pul-



pit Bible so that the audience, many of whom were unlearned, would be impressed with the fact that he was dealing with matters of weight and importance.

John Chatfield learned nothing of all this until months later, nor did he, when he ran across Sun in the room of the head teacher while inspecting the academy the next day, attribute any special importance to it, although he had never known Sun to visit the academy before. Sun remarked, with something more than his usual smirk, that he was inviting the teachers to a little gathering. This turned out to be a most excellent feast, financed by Chen, which doubtless had something to do with the fact that a delegation of students called on the missionary the next day.

"We have come on behalf of the student body," said the spokesman, formally, "to request that Lan Siensen be immediately discharged, and Yang Siensen be made pastor of the city church."

"I can by no means agree to that," replied the amazed missionary, promptly.

"Then," stated the student spokesman still more formally, "we are empowered to notify you as principal that the student body will strike and refuse to attend church again so long as Lan Siensen is pastor."

Now school had just opened, and the boys, who had recently returned from their homes, were not in a position to know the situation which had developed during the summer vacation, and, strangely enough, the delegation was composed of boys who did not belong to the church. It was evident even to the young missionary that some one had put them up to it.

"Kindly take back my unconditional refusal," he stated, emphatically. "The affairs of the church are none of the business of the student body. Tell them from me not to meddle with matters with which they have no concern."

"The students have been deeply affronted by Lan

Siensen on several occasions," said the spokesman, falling back upon an argument which would not have had weight with any one of longer experience.

Student strikes can be most serious affairs in China, and, as this was his first, John Chatfield was anxious to be sure that he was not in the wrong in any particular.

"I will look into the matter," he promised.

On taking it up with Lan, the latter denied having made any of the remarks attributed to him, but, with his usual generosity, suggested that he had perhaps offended them in some way, and that it might be well to meet a delegation of the boys, hear what they had to say, and get things cleared up. He added that if he had done anything to offend he would be more than willing to make suitable apologies. Knowing Lan's talent for rubbing people the wrong way, John Chatfield felt that this might greatly strengthen his position in case it became necessary to force the students to give up their idea of refusing to come again to hear him preach.

Accordingly, a deputation of the students came face to face with Lan in John Chatfield's study. The head teacher was expected to be present, and the boys said that he was on the way, so young Chatfield allowed them to go ahead with what they had to say. This was a grave error. The students took advantage of the absence of a third party and the fact that the new missionary could with difficulty understand the local dialect, and made their remarks to Lan of a quite discourteous character. Although John Chatfield gathered that something was wrong and chafed at his helplessness, he thought it better to go through with it than to break up the conference on grounds which the boys would be sure to deny and to which only Lan could bear witness. Lan, however, had never appeared to better advantage. In spite of the scarcely veiled insolence of the student spokesman, he made a simple and dignified rejoinder, stating that he had never intended to reflect in any way

upon the school and, if he had unwittingly done so, sincerely regretted the fact.

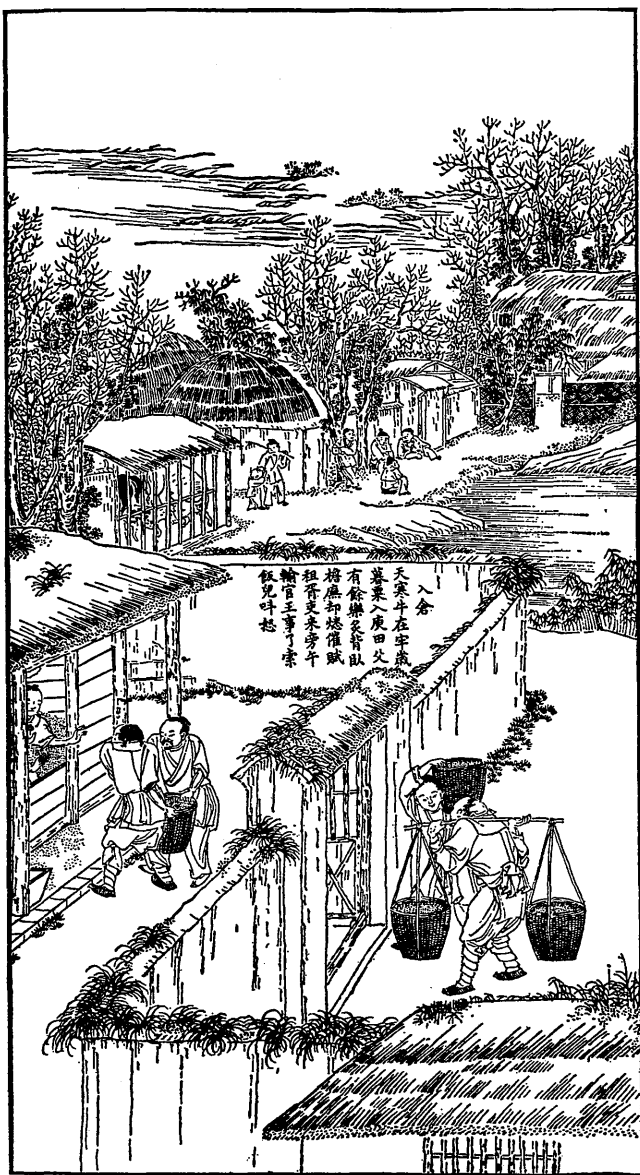
When the students had gone, the missionary enquired of Lan as to what they had said, and it was even worse than he had feared. Lan was broken up over it. He said that he would not have any face to continue in the pastorate after such a humiliation. The missionary was stirred to chagrin as he thought how the school would gloat over having so humbled Lan in his very presence, and then to wrath at the meanness and injustice of it all. His desire for fair play had been interpreted as a sign of weakness and had only made matters worse.

A meeting took up most of the evening, and by the time he was able to get to the school it was too late to deal with the situation that night, so he merely went over the matter briefly with the head teacher, who was entirely noncommittal, and expressed his intention of making the boys apologize for what they had done.

That night he did not sleep. The fact that the head teacher had not come with the boys to meet Lan was a clear indication that at least some of the teachers were backing the students. It was essential that the boys be made to apologize to Lan and abandon their effort to oust him, but it seemed very probable that this would bring about a strike of the whole student body, and perhaps even involve the resignations of teachers and the closing of the academy.

It was years before he learned the plan in its entirety, how Sun and his friends had planned to demoralize him by the threatened strike of the students, and then spring upon the committee the alleged action of the church calling Yang as pastor. He had suspected all along that Sun might have something to do with it, but the most careful enquiry had failed to produce any evidence to that effect.

He did, however, see clearly that all that he was striving for was at stake and that failure to discipline the



入倉

天寒牛在牢歲

暮粟入庾田父

有餘樂多皆臥

枵腹却愁催賦

租胥吏未勞年

輸官王事了索

飯兒呼起



student body would mean the end of his usefulness as a missionary in Kan San. Yang, a young man of the same new type as Lan, and the brilliant and successful college men who were putting new life into the academy, had all been taken into camp by the astute machinations of the old bad crowd that had had its own way for so long. If Yang should succeed to the pastorate through Sun's efforts, he would be Sun's man and would have to stand in with Sun and his crowd. This would effectually block all that John Chatfield was trying to do. During the long hours of that night he came into a new conception of his task. The issue was straightforwardness, democracy, and spirituality against the underhanded regime of the bully with its self-seeking and encouragement of rice-Christians. So he made up his mind to see the thing through even at the risk of closing the school and ending his own cherished work in Kan San.

Meanwhile, word had been sent from the school to Lan that his incumbency as pastor had given rise to a most serious situation, and that if the academy should be closed he would have to bear the blame for it. As a result, Lan was over early the next morning.

"I have come to resign," he stated.

"But why?"

"I have definite word that the students will persist in striking and the teachers will resign."

"Then we shall close the academy," said John Chatfield, determinedly.

"You must not do that," said Lan, with agitation. "It will be better to send me away."

"No," said the missionary.

"But I can not bear to feel that I am responsible for the closing of the academy," said Lan, with tears.

"But it is not really your fault," said the missionary, kindly.

"I beg of you—" began Lan.

"No more," interrupted the missionary, firmly. "This has become much more than merely your personal matter."

Having faced the worst during the night, he took prompt action. Knowing that in this case he could expect no help from his otherwise most reliable head teacher, on whom he was accustomed to depend for the handling of ticklish situations, he took matters entirely in to his own hands as principal, for the one and only time. He planned his arrival at the school so as to summon the two ringleaders, who had been the spokesmen of the previous afternoon, just as the bell was ringing for chapel. This enabled him to deal with them while all the rest of the school were engaged. He put the situation to them briefly and asked them whether they would apologize. When they refused to do so, he declared them expelled and escorted them off the compound in person, instructing the gatekeeper, in their hearing, that they were not to be allowed to return.

The rest of the students, who guessed at what was going on but were not sufficiently certain to feel warranted in interrupting the chapel service, refused to go to classes when they found that their leaders were gone, and swarmed to the principal's office to demand an explanation. The agitated but determined missionary stated his position clearly and carefully.

"I can not permit any students in this school to be insolent, or to interfere with matters which are none of their business by threatening me with a strike. The two ringleaders refused to retract and apologize, so I have expelled them," he concluded.

"But they were simply the spokesmen of all of us," said the students.

"Just what do you mean by that?"

"We will not attend classes until our representatives are reinstated," said a student, boldly, and this was echoed by all the rest.

"Then I shall have to expel every student who persists in such an attitude," replied the principal, firmly.

The students looked at one another doubtfully, and John Chatfield followed up his attack.

"Go to class or get out. I will allow you three minutes to decide," he announced, curtly, and took out his watch.

The students withdrew and discussed this ultimatum in undertones, looking at times at the missionary, who stood motionless, watch in hand.

"One minute more," he stated, quietly.

"We will go to class," said the student leaders, "but we would like to present a request."

"Do so," said the principal.

"It is that our two leaders may return."

"They may, provided they make full and public apology."

Lan was immediately sent for, and once more he and the students stood face to face, the boys with bowed heads and averted faces, the pastor ill at ease in the presence of their humiliation. This time the missionary took no chances on language, but himself made a statement on behalf of the students, to which they all gave assent.

And there the whole thing ended. The failure of their plottings in the school was so complete that students and teachers alike refused to take part in any further demonstration to force the hand of the committee over the head of the missionary, and so, when the committee met and he made formal recommendation that Yang Ling Mo be appointed to the church at Lotien, Sun was the first to support it, in which he was heartily seconded by Chen.

Lan, who was to have been the victim, continued as pastor of the city church for many years, and did earnest and conscientious work.

John Chatfield had had considerable doubt as to the wisdom of keeping Yang on, and the other missionaries were positive and emphatic that Kan San was no proper



sphere for his talents as a trouble-maker and that he should be sent back forthwith to Dingpu. However, young Chatfield had developed a real liking for little Yang, as he had come to call him, and believed that he had the making of an able worker. That faith was to be fully justified.



### III. THE BARBER AND THE FORTY GOOD-FOR-NOTHINGS

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Little Yang had been pastor of the church at Lotien for over a year and had attacked his new work with the same zeal that he had manifested upon his first arrival in Kan San. His foreign pastor had taken great interest in getting him started right, and the two had worked much together among the surrounding villages.

On one such occasion they were returning after dark from a round of visitation, and had almost reached Lotien when they saw a man with a lantern coming along the road toward them. His was the usual contrivance of oiled paper, not a foreign lantern such as little Yang carried, so that they were almost upon him, still expecting him to yield his share of the narrow road, before they saw a figure on horseback looming up behind. They stepped quickly into the soft mud of a rice field, and then remained there while a mounted officer rode by, followed by half a dozen soldiers who stumbled along the winding path in the darkness. In a land where honest folk normally stay close indoors after dark, there

was something sinister in their sudden emergence from the gloom and stealthy disappearance.

The pastor and the missionary remained without speaking until the sounds of their footsteps died away.

"What does that mean?" asked John Chatfield.

"They are probably going to raid the gamblers at Changdo. The rumour is that some of the farmers have been losing a lot of money."

Changdo was only a half-mile from Lotien, so the two sat in the chapel doorway until the return of the raiders. They soon came back to the outskirts of the village, carrying numerous lanterns now, and it was possible to make out a number of prisoners.

"I wonder if they got any of our church members," said little Yang.

As Changdo was a very small village and there were a number of members there, this remark opened up disheartening possibilities. Little Yang and the new missionary had made it their first task to clean house. Several members had already been expelled from the church and a number of the others led to make confession and return. A good many cases were still pending. It would be a blow to the good name of the church to have any arrested who were still on the books as members in good and regular standing. However, a neighbour returned about this time, for the whole village had been aroused by the passage of the soldiers, and gave the names of the prisoners. Both the Chinese pastor and the missionary were much relieved to find that only one had ever been a member of the church, and he had been dropped several years before.

"He joined the church when Liu Lin Kong was pastor," little Yang told John Chatfield, as he lighted him up the stairs to his draughty room under the roof. "At that time the church was known as Bi Nan Tang."

"Escape Trouble Hall!" exclaimed the missionary. "How did it ever come to have that name?"

"Well, you see, Lin Kong was a good friend of Small

Ox and the rest of the Forty Good-for-Nothings, and every time one of them got into trouble he would come and join the church and Lin Kong would use his influence as pastor to shield him, and sometimes even persuade the foreign pastor to take his side."

"All this is certainly new to me," the missionary exclaimed. "No one ever told me about this before."

"You see, everybody was afraid of Lin Kong and the Forty Good-for-Nothings, and didn't dare to tell," said little Yang, simply.

The missionary saw. Little Yang, not being a local man, could not be reached by the infinite means of petty persecution that could be practised upon one whose family and property connections were within reach, and from him John Chatfield had already learned many things that had long been well known to every one but the missionary in charge.

Liu Lin Kong he knew as a lewd fellow of the baser sort, with close-set eyes and an oily leer, who, in a misguided moment, had been sent to the seminary by one of his predecessors, and later thrust out of his pastorate at Lotien for adultery open and unashamed. He had known him only to have contempt for him, but little Yang's narrative revealed a certain cunning, and considerable real ability, although along unregenerate lines.

"And," concluded little Yang, with a chuckle, "ever since Lin Kong left, whenever a new preacher comes to the Lotien church, Wang Su, the barber, gets into trouble."

"You are pleased to speak in parables," said the American, with dignity. "Sit down here and tell me all about it."

So they took seats facing each other across the red varnished top of an eight-fairy-table, on which a smoky lamp flared and flickered in the gusts of wind that came through the loosely laid tiles above their heads, and little Yang, his boyish, half-impudent face wreathed in an

ensnaring grin, began the strange tale of the barber and the Forty Good-for-Nothings.

"We Chinese look down on actors, chair-bearers, and barbers, and Wang Su is a barber. Besides that, he is not a local man, but came here from Puko, and is a gloomy sort of man with a long face."

Here little Yang illustrated its gloom with a grimace, and its length with a chubby hand held halfway between chin and waist line.

John Chatfield knew Wang Su, a tall, cadaverous, taciturn figure of pessimism, who occasionally occupied a rear bench on Sunday mornings. He came from a place as much as thirty miles distant, and hence in any village matter requiring nice discrimination he was to be classed as an outlander, an alien, and a foreigner. He had been an enquirer for many years, but had never joined the church, for he had a quarrelsome disposition and was always doing things which made the congregation disinclined to receive him as a member.

"One day, a couple of months ago," continued little Yang, "one of the Forty Good-for-Nothings went into Wang Su's shop to get his head shaved. These forty brethren, as they call themselves, do no work, but gamble, and beat the bamboo carrying-pole, as we Chinese say—that is, get money by trickery and extortion. Wang Su was busy cutting the hair of a little schoolboy, so he merely told the rascal to wait a bit. This, coming from a barber, the ne'er-do-well chose to regard as a discourtesy, which naturally paved the way for him to depart without paying for his shave, remarking that he had to go home after the money and would settle later.

"The next time he came to the shop he made no mention of the debt, so Wang Su finally ventured to remind him of it. As a barber seldom dares to dun a customer, this was a crowning insult. The member of the brotherhood arose in his wrath, beat up the barber, smashed the shop, and threw the fixtures, consisting of

two benches and a wash-basin, into the street. Then he informed the crowd that had gathered that Wang Su had begun it all on the previous occasion by first insulting and then reviling and cursing him outrageously, and went his way the picture of righteous indignation.

"Some of the neighbours came to tell me about it, for many thought Wang Su was one of our members, and Wei Chang dropped in to say that the barber would probably soon be around to enlist my help, for he generally came to the church when he got into trouble, particularly when there was a new pastor, and he had some hopes of getting him to take active measures. Wei Chang said he had been unusually zealous in attending church since my coming.

"Sure enough, Wang Su soon arrived, told his story, and begged me to help him."

Little Yang noticed that John Chatfield was beginning to look grave, for it was precisely this sort of thing that had led many to enter the church from unworthy motives, and had constituted the greatest obstacle to the work. He also realized that his foreign pastor had been a bit shy of him since the episode of the city pastorate and the student strike, so he hastened to explain.

"I did not want to have anything to do with it, but I knew that as an outsider he had no one else to whom to turn for help, and he begged so hard that I did not have the heart to refuse entirely. So I began to question him.

"'Why do you curse people that way?' I demanded.

"'I didn't curse him,' said Wang Su. 'Why should I curse him?'

"'But if you didn't curse him, why should he beat you?' I asked him.

"'Because he did not want to pay!' he replied.

"'You say you didn't curse him, but you have no evidence, you see, only your word against his,' said I.

"'But I most certainly have evidence,' said Wang Su.

'A small boy was in the shop all the time, and he can bear witness.'

"That is entirely different,' said I. 'Go and get him.'

"So Wang Su went to the schoolhouse, and soon returned with a small boy. I wanted to be sure to get the truth, so I am afraid I was pretty hard on the little fellow.

"Now don't speak a lot of lies, but try to speak one sentence of true words. You must bear witness. Now when So-and-so was in the shop, when you were having your head shaved, did Wang Su swear at him?"

"No, he didn't,' said the boy.

"Why do you lie to me like that and say he didn't swear at him?' I asked him, severely.

"I am not lying, I am telling you the truth,' he asserted stoutly.

"Now be careful what you say,' I continued. 'This may turn into an important affair and cause you to eat much bitterness.'

"He didn't, he didn't,' reiterated the small boy, beginning to cry.

"Being now satisfied as to the truth of the matter, I sent for the rascal and asked him why he had beaten up Wang Su and smashed his shop.

"He insulted and cursed me,' was the reply.

"If he insulted you, why did you not beat him up at once, instead of waiting until the next time you came to the shop?' I demanded, severely.

"This nonplussed the rascal and he was at a loss what to say, so I continued, taking advantage of his confusion.

"This sort of thing will not do. He has good evidence that he did not curse you. You are plainly in the wrong and must compensate him.'

"He went away without making any promises, so I sent for Wang Su and told him to go to the *debaos* and make a complaint, as he had a clear case. As soon as

the neighbours saw him go, some of them told the father of the good-for-nothing, who came to me in haste.

"‘My son is in the wrong. We will restore,’ he said.

"Now, although I had thought that this would close the incident, and was relieved to have it over, I began to hear that this bad brotherhood was unwilling to let the matter rest. So a few days later I was not surprised when a crowd of them came to the chapel, angry, threatening, and clearly bent on making trouble, but whether for me, or for Wang Su only, I could not at first determine.

"‘There are still some matters about Wang Su,’ they began, unceremoniously.

"‘What matters?’ said I.

"‘He cursed me,’ said one, ‘and I have evidence of it.’

"‘That is so, for I was there myself and heard it,’ said another.

"Then they all began discussing loudly what vengeance they should take. Finally one of them urged the rest to compromise on a money settlement, to which they agreed and fell silent, while the leader turned to me with a proposition. As he began to speak, I suddenly saw clearly that what they were really leading up to was that I become a silent partner of their gang, although their proposal was ostensibly concerned with Wang Su.

"‘I have a suggestion,’ said he. ‘Let Wang Su pay two thousand cash to assuage wrath. I will act as middleman.’

"‘Who told you to act as middleman?’ I enquired of him, severely. ‘Why should Wang Su give you any two thousand cash? You are making this up as you go along. Wang Su wouldn’t dare to curse any one just now, when the other affair has not fully blown over. Now clear out.’

"There was more talk, but when they saw that I would not play into their hands as Liu Lin Kong used to, they finally went. Now they had planned to use the



money for a feast, and had their mouths all made up for it. Then their twofold defeat rankled, and made them unwilling to rest until they had gotten some money out of Wang Su. So the crowd of them went to the mother of the little schoolboy who had borne witness.

"'You are a Lotien woman,' they began, 'and we are Lotien men. Wang Su is an outsider. Your son is a bad lot. He helped Wang Su and spoke against us.'

"This frightened the woman very much, as she well knew the reckless character of the brotherhood, so she protested earnestly that she had no desire to injure them or to help Wang Su.

"'Then you must right the wrong that your son did us,' said these rascals.

"'But how can I do that?' asked the woman.

"'All we want you to do is to say just one sentence, that Wang Su bought your son for two thousand cash to bear false witness.'

"So they arranged with the woman to go and demand the two thousand cash which they now accused Wang Su of promising the boy, which was then to be laid out in a handsome feast.

"Poor Wang Su's protestations and denials were in vain in the face of the assertions of the mother, nor was any evidence available to confute this totally false charge. Lacking evidence, he did not have the face to come to me again for help, at which I was much relieved, for although I was certain that it was a case of the most barefaced extortion, there was nothing I could do, for the mother would control the testimony of the little boy.

"The unlucky barber finally managed to compromise on a payment of fifteen hundred cash, on which the gang proceeded to have a joyous feast to celebrate the successful termination of their machinations."

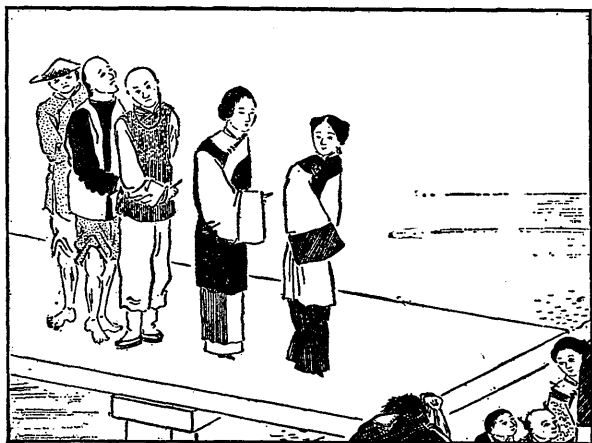
Little Yang was serious enough as he brought the tale to a close.

"And that is why," he finished, "when a new preacher comes to this field, they test him out by making trouble

for the barber. They know that the barber has no place to turn save to the church, and if the preacher is inclined to play into their hands as Liu Lin Kong used to do, the fact that Wang Su is not a member leaves the way open, and if he is not willing to be a party to their skullduggery, it serves as a declaration of war."

"It seems a shame," said the missionary, indignantly, "not to help the barber against that gang of thieves, but if we went in for that sort of thing I suppose we would be kept busy all the time."

"Yes," said little Yang, "and how then could we ever make the people around here understand that this church is something more than an Escape Trouble Hall?"



#### IV. A DEAL IN DEATH-BEDS

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Returning to Lotien later than usual, little Yang and his foreign pastor had almost reached the chapel when they caught sight of a small fire in an alley near by.

"What do you suppose they are doing with a fire this time of night?" whispered John Chatfield.

"Cooking dog, probably," said little Yang, flippantly.

"Just what do you mean by that?" asked the missionary, who was coming to learn that the more serious the situation the more light-heartedly did little Yang appear to regard it.

"Exactly what I say. Those people are an exceptionally bad lot."

"You don't mean to tell me that they are going to eat their dog!"

"Not *their* dog," said little Yang.

"That is most unusual. I want to see if it really is dog," said the missionary, starting toward the fire.

"No, no," cried little Yang, sharply. "Come back and let us go by quickly. There are some very bad people in

that Hu clan. They have caused the church here in Lotien lots of trouble, and it would only make more if we should nose into their very private affairs."

They skirted the long outer wall of the great clan house where lived the score of families that made up the clan of Hu, and came to the chapel.

It had none of the look of a church. Indeed, it was only a part of the Hu clan house which had been purchased and adapted for use as a chapel and parsonage, comprising an outer court with the rooms on the three sides of it, the fourth being the street wall.

They entered through the chapel, crossing its worn and uneven concrete floor between the shiny comfortless benches, while the light of little Yang's lantern fell on the bright colours of the Sunday-school pictures that interrupted the barrenness of the white-washed walls, and on the bleak simplicity of railing and pulpit. The far side of the chapel was open to a stone-paved court, containing a potted "Buddha's Hand" with its fanciful, yellow, half-closed fist, a chicken-coop, and a large brown-glazed water-*kong*, to catch the drip of the bamboo eave troughs, in which a number of fat goldfish were wont lazily to swim. At the inner end were the quarters of little Yang and his family. Opposite the chapel were the room he used as a study and, between it and the seldom used street door of the courtyard, a vacant room. This still belonged to the clan of Hu, who occupied the room above it and thus overlooked court and chapel and parsonage. Property is often purchased room by room in China.

This vacant room had once been rented from the Hu family by the church as a schoolroom, but had been unused by either party for several years, save that little Yang had nailed up the door at its further end and thus prevented ingress from the big clan house beyond.

Instead of turning to his own quarters, little Yang now crossed the court and entered the vacant room. John Chatfield halted outside, but little Yang motioned

to him to enter, and then spoke to some one he could not see.

"Here is Tu Siensen come to visit you," he said, holding his lantern above a figure on a couch.

The missionary knew without asking that it was Hu Lo San, the oldest member of the church and the least distinguished of the clan of Hu. He had no visible means of support, and little Yang had heard that he had for a time been a beggar, but this his family denied, and it is likely that he dragged out a pinched existence on the pittance furnished by his younger brother, Wei Chang, ex-colporteur, deacon, and the only other member of the Hu family who belonged to the church. He was a humble and faithful soul who never missed services, and John Chatfield had regularly seen him there on his visits, sleeping through the sermon in his rickety bamboo reclining-chair, with flies buzzing about his face, and being assisted to his feet when the congregation rose for prayer. He had never succeeded in establishing touch with anything behind that mask-like face, but Lo San was already an old man when he first knew him. He looked a pitiful enough scarecrow as he lay there like a corpse, with his seventy years and his ragged clothes, but he was noticeably cleaner than John Chatfield had ever seen him before.

"Here is Tu Siensen," repeated little Yang, in a louder voice, and old Lo San opened his eyes, looked at him uncertainly for a moment, and, as he always made a point of doing, gravely shook hands in foreign style, clinging clammily to his hand until he pulled it away.

After they bade him good night, little Yang led the way to his own guest-room at the end of the court, which was furnished with the yellow chairs, ornamented with black Chinese characters, of which he was so justly proud, and which boasted the only window glass in fifty villages. Here his bright-eyed little wife set tea, fragrant with rose petals, before them, to which they gave their attention.

Little Yang was beginning to take his place in the estimation of the missionary as the most progressive and energetic of the pastors in the district of Kan San. Like Lan, he had had several years in high school before his seminary course, which put him far above the rest in point of education and placed him halfway between the older type of evangelists and the newer type of college-trained pastors that were soon to arrive. He was fundamentally earnest and took a boyish pride in everything connected with his church, and particularly displayed great zest in solving the difficulties that were constantly coming up. He had a point in common with John Chatfield in that he was not a Kan San man, but came from the neighbouring district of Dingpu, which made him quite half as much a foreigner as the missionary. They were both new to the work, but had already been through several campaigns together. From him John Chatfield was to get most of his education as a cub missionary.

Something in his manner in taking him to see old Lo San was unusual, so as he looked up from his tea with a sigh of satisfaction, John Chatfield went right to the point.

"Why doesn't old Lo San stay at home," he enquired, "instead of turning the chapel premises into a sick-room?"

"That is just another case of the church 'eating bitterness' in consequence of not having an entirely separate property of its own instead of merely a few rooms in the Hu clan house," replied little Yang. "A number of the Hu's belong to the Forty Good-for-Nothings and have made us lots of trouble. They were the ones who borrowed most of the chapel seats for a wedding, kept them over Sunday to the great inconvenience of the congregation, and then hid them away in an inner court and denied ever having had them. It took me several week's parley merely to learn that I couldn't get them back. When I finally called in the *debaos*, the local con-

stable, he read them a tremendous lecture, which has helped some. They would steal the chapel itself if they thought they could."

"We ought to get old Lo San out of the church premises," said John Chatfield, a trifle shortly.

He had had a number of experiences of entire outsiders settling down in rooms connected with churches, making them their permanent place of residence, and hanging on like horse leeches in spite of all church and pastor could do, until he had ousted them in person after much unpleasantness. The subject was a touchy one with him,

"I don't blame Lo San for not liking to stay at home," said little Yang. "He has two rooms off a back court of the big clan house that are dank, squalid, almost barren of furniture, and in a high state of disrepair. His old wife still lives there. The chapel is much more pleasant, and he has haunted it for years. Besides, he was born in one of the rooms that were sold to the mission by his father and thrown together to make the chapel, and he says that is where he wants to die."

Little Yang's wife entered and smilingly poured more hot water on the leaves in the teacups, replaced the covers and, with a courteous word of invitation to partake, withdrew.

"Haden't you better tell his family to come and take him away?" asked John Chatfield.

"I have been to them three times," replied little Yang, looking very grave, "but they only promise and don't come. My wife is almost sick cooking for him, keeping him clean, and looking after him day and night."

"Cooking for him!" said the American indignantly. "Do you mean to say that they are letting him starve?"

"Well," said little Yang, "Wei Chang is the only other member of the clan who belongs to the church. He brings something every day or two, but says he has no money and can't do any more. None of the others have

come near, although he has been sick now for two weeks."

"And I suppose that if we didn't feed him and keep him alive they would swear that we had made away with him."

"Very likely," said little Yang, "and then we would have to bury him as well."

Young Chatfield began to see a great light.

"I believe that they are manœuvring to have him die on our hands and save the cost of a funeral," he exclaimed.

"That is exactly the situation," said little Yang, simply.

John Chatfield had heard of such things, but this was his first and only experience of the sort. According to custom, the care of the sick man and cost of the funeral should fall on the clan if the immediate family should prove too poor to assume the burden, but the Hu clan was trying to foist them upon the church.

"We can't allow you and your wife, or the church, either, to be imposed upon in any such fashion," he told little Yang, rather hotly. "You go to the head of the clan and tell him straight, and without unnecessary politeness, that he must move Lo San at once. I will back you up."

Some days later little Yang appeared at the study in Kan San, his round boyish face a study in perplexity. He had repeatedly seen the leading members of the clan of Hu, who had promised everything and performed nothing.

"And how is old Lo San getting on?" he was asked.

"I am afraid we can't keep him alive much longer," he replied, sadly.

John Chatfield expressed his sympathy.

"And that is not all of it," continued little Yang, becoming, if possible, still more solemn. "The Hu clan is boasting that when Lo San dies on our premises it will give them the ownership of the chapel."



This seemed so preposterous that John Chatfield wanted to laugh, but the look on little Yang's face checked him.

"Wei Chang tells me," he went on, "that the deed was destroyed when the mission house in Kan San was burned during the Boxer uprising, and that the Hu clan have learned of this and for several years have been saying that there never was a deed and that the property is theirs. Furthermore, the tax-book was never made out to the mission, but remained in the name of the Hu family, so they have the tax receipts."

"The deed is certainly gone," said John Chatfield, "and when I enquired at the district magistrate's *yamen* they said the records of that time were not to be found, so it is impossible to get any evidence of its registration. But we have possession and know we are in the right. Why worry?"

"You don't understand," said little Yang, earnestly. "It is this way. Lo San is now in the schoolroom, across our courtyard from the chapel. This room, as you know, does not belong to us, but, long ago, when we had a school there, was rented from the Hu clan, at which time a doorway was cut so that we could get into it from our court. The door at the far end opens into one of their courtyards, but I nailed it up when I came. Now they say that, according to the custom in these parts, if the corpse is carried out through that doorway into our courtyard, and through our courtyard and gate to the street, it will be evidence of the permanent right of the Hu family to come and go through our court and gateway. I don't know whether this is really so or not, for we have no such custom at Dingpu, where I come from, but every one I have asked says that is the way here."

"But how could that affect our ownership?" asked John Chatfield.

"If they had access to the courtyard they would gradually encroach on the church and the parsonage, and

others would settle down as Lo San has done. They could make things very unpleasant, and might take possession sometime when I was away, or, when the church changes pastors, they would move in unless the new pastor were there before the old one moved out. The church would be sure to lose possession sooner or later."

"I see," said John Chatfield. "That is the way the old woman at Puko was defrauded of her home, and the mason at Luya."

"But that is not all," said little Yang. "The loss of the property would be serious enough, but if it should come about by having a dead man wished on us it would mean a tremendous loss of face and a blow to the prestige of the church. Everybody would laugh. It would hinder our work for years to come."

"Of course, the obvious thing," said the missionary, "is to carry him into his own home, or at least into one of their courtyards."

"They would probably shut the door in our faces."

"Then the only way we could possibly put the responsibility on them would be by leaving him in front of their gate, but that would be a fearfully heartless sort of procedure."

"Out of the question," exclaimed little Yang. "They would never get over telling that that was the way the church looked after its members. It would be better to lose the chapel."

"If we could only get the Hu clan to listen to reason and do the right thing!" said Young Chatfield. "Suppose we go to them again."

"It is not a matter of reason, or of right and wrong, as they and the village look at it," said little Yang, wisely. "It is a contest of wits. They would not forego their present advantage. We must beat them at their own game."

"Something of the wisdom of the serpent would appear to be indicated," said the missionary.

So they fell into silence. John Chatfield began to

picture the situation: the sick man in the schoolroom belonging to the Hu clan, the nailed-up door leading into their courtyard beyond, the doorway into the chapel courtyard.

"If we could only close up that doorway," sighed little Yang.

"That is just what I was thinking," said John Chatfield. "Open the door at their end that you nailed up when you came, plaster up the doorway at our end, and thus automatically transfer Lo San, without discomfort or risk to him, from our premises to theirs, and put an end to any question about their having access to our court."

"But it is not our wall," objected little Yang. "We have no legal right to touch it and would put ourselves in the wrong."

"We shall have to take the chance," said the missionary; "and for that matter, we have a good case, for they originally sold us a court with no doorway leading into it at that point, and if they later allowed us to open the doorway they must now allow us to close it."

"They will certainly refuse to look at it that way," said little Yang, doubtfully. "They won't like it, and will probably make a row."

"Then let them. We can't allow them to put anything over on us like that. Have a mason on hand early tomorrow, and I will come and help. Don't tell a soul, though, and we will take them by surprise. There is no use in having a big row if we can avoid it."

Little Yang grinned. It was the first time that he had looked natural since old Lo San took sick.

The next morning at the chapel they lost no time in contracting with the mason for the closing of the doorway, and when he had brought in the requisite supply of bamboo and lime and clay, and commenced work, little Yang, after making sure that old Lo San was comfortable, removed the nails and reopened the door at the inner end of the room which led into the Hu court-

yard. The branch of the Hu tribe who lived there took one look at the proceedings and began scurrying about to carry the news.

Soon the clan began to pour in. They would go and watch the mason impassively weaving split bamboo across the opening, and plastering it with mud, and question him volubly. Then they would come and look uncertainly at John Chatfield where he sat in the guest-room. Small Ox came, ex-church member, and one of the leading lights among the Forty Good-for-Nothings, the local fraternity of hoodlums and ne'er-do-wells. With him came his father, Wei Chang, deacon in the church, apologetic and embarrassed, but stubbornly standing by. The dog-eating members of the tribe came in with a swagger, and many more that John Chatfield had not even heard of. It was a gathering of the whole clan, and Wei Chang's was the only friendly face among them.

Little Yang's plan of campaign was to meet the situation by observing all the amenities. Whenever one of the leading members of the clan entered, he would courteously insist on his coming into the guest-room, being introduced to the foreign shepherd and having some refreshment, and his wife would smilingly set tea and cakes before him. Bluster and violence they understood, but they were not prepared for courtesy, and the more trouble any of them had made him and the church, the more punctiliously did little Yang insist upon escorting him to a seat of honour, and treating all his evasions and refusals as evidences of the highest breeding and politeness. John Chatfield tried to rise to the occasion, and asked polite questions as to crops, and held forth largely on the gossip of the countryside. All of this incidentally prevented them from getting together to agree on some course of action.

Little Yang and his wife displayed just the right amount and quality of courtesy to bring into relief their very business-like determination to see the thing through, and the friendly attitude of Wei Chang dis-

concerted his son Small Ox, who was their leader when there was mischief abroad; and while they were plainly wishful to start something, and were clearly ready to go to any length, they had been taken too much by surprise and did not quite know how to begin.

At length one of them came and stood before the missionary rather offensively.

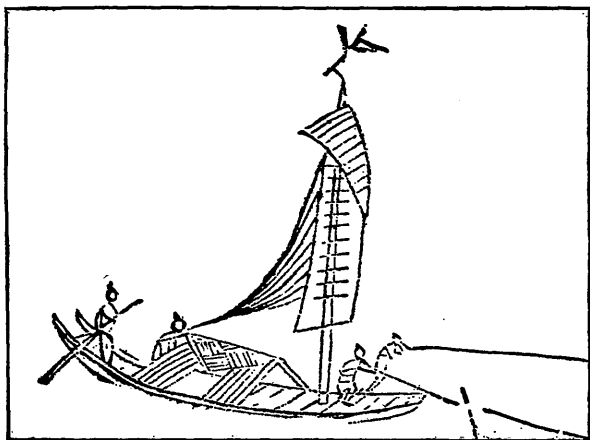
"I see that you have some repairs going on," he remarked.

Deliberately John Chatfield arose and looked him in the eye. Wei Chang and little Yang, still smiling, moved to his side. He replied crisply, without overmuch courtesy, using a common formula:

"It is not convenient for us to have the doorway there, and we have decided to close it."

The group edged in and looked threateningly from little Yang and Wei Chang to the American, and uncertainly at one another, but no one came to the support of the speaker, for they were under the handicap of knowing that they were in the wrong and at a disadvantage, and could not on the instant hit on the way out. So, while little Yang and his wife continued to smile, the psychological moment passed into history.

Poor old Lo San died the next day and was duly buried by his own people. Little Yang conducted the funeral services, and, from all that John Chatfield could gather, it seemed that he carried them through with what, on a more cheerful occasion, would have amounted to something of a flourish.



## V. THE DARKEST HOUR

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It was raining hard by the time John Chatfield got back to his house-boat. In fact, it had been raining for four days. He walked up the narrow, slippery plank to the diminutive deck, and down into his room, where he deposited on the floor a stray kitten that he had rescued from the weather. After hanging on a peg his dripping hat and rain-coat, he sat down in the single small chair that filled the quarter of the room not occupied by bed and table, and contemplated the kitten. It was a forlorn little object as it made a discouraged and ineffectual effort to put its soiled and bedraggled white coat to rights. Pretty soon it began to shiver, and John Chatfield bethought himself that his own heavy boots were wet through from three days of tramping in the mud, and that he was far from dry. It was beginning to get dark.

"Dasifu," he called.

A slot opened in the wall above the table, and a face appeared.

"The tin of milk, and a saucer," he requested.

"Chinese cats do not eat milk," said the face, with a look of disapproval.

"No matter; we'll try it, anyway. Better bring some hot water also."

The face remained long enough to register a still further degree of disapproval, and vanished, whereupon the ingredients materialized through the slot.

"Better hot and thin than cold," muttered John Chatfield to himself, testing the mixture with a finger. "Less danger of the little beggar overeating."

The diminutive cat approached the saucer with an air of despondent curiosity, and then hesitated.

The face again manifested itself, wearing a look of serene superiority.

"Chinese cats do not eat milk," it observed.

Just then the kitten thought better of it, and began pessimistically absorbing the hot food.

"You can see for yourself," said John Chatfield, with a wave of his hand toward the busy little creature.

But the conservatism of the face was proof against even ocular demonstration.

"Chinese cats do not eat milk," it said with cold finality, and closed the slot to shut out this outrage against the traditions of forty centuries.

John Chatfield sat and frowned into the gathering darkness. It had been exhausting work speaking in a foreign language in the illy-ventilated chapel. Fortunately the rain had ceased during the morning, so that there had been a good attendance, but it had all gone for nothing. Three days of tramping through the country in the rain, calling on all the members and talking over with them plans for a forward movement, and nothing to show for it. Would there ever be anything to show for it? There was an elusive quality about this church at Puko.

Then the pastor, An Yu Lo, senior minister of the Kan San district, with his harsh voice, his gown of

stiff, steel-grey silk, and his ponderous quotations from the classics, did he really believe in what the missionary was trying to do? Was it that, or conservatism, or a feeling of superiority, or sheer inability that led to one failure after another?

The darkness increased and the chill rain beat against the ill-fitting windows. The gloom deepened in the little room. The kitten finished the hot milk, climbed on the bed, and began to lick its chops with an almost convincing imitation of good cheer.

John Chatfield got to counting up the number of hard-boiled eggs he had eaten in the last four days. Two at each place if he was successful in saying the polite thing and avoiding the insistence of rural hospitality, otherwise three. That made at least fifty for the three days of calling, not to mention cakes, peanuts, and sweets. There was a regular technique for eating the eggs. One pounded them softly on the table until the shell and skin could be taken off together in one long peeling, with the last bit of shell in the form of a scoop for the local Worcestershire sauce, which was poured into the cracks of the yolk, after the peeled egg had been carefully manipulated between the fingers and broken cleanly into two halves. And then there had been the countless bowls of tea, often made with unclean water, boiled and fairly sanitary, to be sure, but unappetizing. It made him uneasy to think about it all. It seemed to him that the tea had tanned the eggs. He felt as if he had swallowed a locked pocketbook and lost the key. He was always sick for several days after one of these country trips, and he realized that this would be no exception. He wished that it was possible to get the people to understand, so that he could mingle with them and refuse to eat without offending their simple ideas of hospitality.

His meditations were interrupted by the arrival of a light and his meal of milk toast. As he ate he wondered what his wife was doing. He was only twenty miles



from home, but it was nearly a day's pull against the current and over numerous rapids, and too far to walk after the conclusion of the afternoon service. He was exasperated, as always, over the waste of time involved in the lack of good communications, and thought how any one of his favourite limited trains would get him back in a half-hour.

He pictured the big, rambling house in Kan San that he called home. A noisy house, with slamming of blinds, and rattling of windows, and creaking of doors. He thought with a smile of the many times that his wife had gotten him up in the dead of night to search the house, insisting that she heard marauders. He wondered how she stood it all alone for the days and sometimes weeks that he was away, with the single servant who came in by the day, and only the old gatekeeper within call at night. Plucky. She never said anything about it, though. They both knew that the work had to be done. That was what they had come for. He speculated as to how hard it really was for her.

He undressed slowly and got into his clammy pyjamas. He took a flashlight and automatic pistol out of his bag and placed them within reach. Boats regularly tied up for the night at towns for protection. There were pirates on the river. He had trained his boatmen to push on and spend the night wherever they happened to be. Sometimes they travelled all night. It saved a lot of time. His boatmen were more willing to take the risk and the pirates would be more shy of attacking if it were known that he was armed. He had never used the pistol, and scarcely expected to, although he felt he had no special talent for martyrdom. He thought of it always half humorously as a prophylactic and, indeed, disposed of it soon after.

He reached hesitantly for the lamp, with a wry smile. He was not concerned about pirates, but he had to nerve himself to turn out the light.

As he got into his damp bedding he thought con-

temptuously that he had not been afraid of the dark for twenty-five years, and that it was silly. It seemed to be getting worse, though. He never knew when it would pounce upon him. He wondered what had caused it. He did not know until some years later that he had had a nervous breakdown, but merely faced in the mornings the fear that he could not get through the day, and set his teeth, and hoped and prayed that he might. But the nights were the worst. He hoped that he was tired enough to sleep straight through to morning. And that he would have no bad dreams. They shook him somehow. Unaccountably. Sometimes for days.

The stray kitten curled up at his feet. The storm increased in violence. Into his mind came a verse from the passage that he had read in the service that morning. "The work of our hands, establish thou it."

"That is something to hold to," he thought, drowsily.



## VI. THE VILLAGE AND THE WORLD OUTSIDE

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This is the tale of the village. In China the village is not just a name and a geographical location to which people come at will and from which they depart when ready, but is a person. It is not a legal person like a corporation, composed of by-laws and a list of names, but with neither body nor soul, for in a very real way it has both.

The village is one flesh. With scarce an exception, its male inhabitants enter it through the gate of birth, being descended from a common ancestor and having the same surname. They do not leave it, but spend their lives in the same village where their forefathers have lived for a score of generations.

The soul of the village is a tribal personality deep rooted in the soil and in its long past. It has outward manifestation in the ancestral hall where the spirits of the fathers abide in rows of wooden ancestral tablets, and mingle with the spirits of the living through immemorial habit and tradition. The personality of the

village overshadows the psychology of its individual members.

The leading character and chief actor in this tale might be any village, but is in this case the village of Wong Chia. The name means literally Wong family, which is a very common type of village nomenclature in China, and indeed elsewhere, as witness Jamestown or Jonesborough, but which in China actually means that practically all bear the name indicated.

Next among the *dramatis personæ* is the World Outside. It came to the ancient Kingdom of the Midst and it in due time became a republic. It reached the district of Kan San in the person of the new district magistrate, Han Siensen, who had troubles of his own in trying to reform a conservative countryside. It touched trade, and tentacles of steam navigation extended into the interior, raising the standard of living and bringing higher prices and such manifestations as the infrequent, lonely house-boats of foreign agents of kerosene and cigarette companies, and an increasing selection of foreign commodities on the shelves of shops. It impinged upon the world of ideas, and the new newspapers were passed from one reader to another until they were worn out, and school books had constantly changing contents. It invaded the remotest regions in the persons of missionaries sent by a Christendom, of late somewhat shame-faced over slave-ships, opium wars, and spheres of influence, to present its more intangible aspects in the shape of churches, schools, and hospitals. At last it came to Wong Chia also.

The tailor of Wong Chia was a pawn in the game, or the hero of this tale, as you will. The village came into conflict with the World Outside and the tailor was crushed between them—but that is the story.

An urgent and incoherent message was brought by word of mouth from little Yang, pastor of the church at

Lotien, that the tailor had been set upon by the village, and might even be dead by now, and would the foreign shepherd come with all haste to the rescue. John Chatfield promptly got out his bicycle and was soon making his best speed along the narrow, twisting paths between the rice-fields that constitute almost the only roads in Kan San.

The village of Wong Chia, in common with ten thousand others in mid-China, was composed of two parts, the human anthill of the village itself at the centre, a compact group of two-storey brick buildings, largely hidden by trees, whitewashed, with roofs of black tiles, and, surrounding it, its several score of acres of rice-fields, one acre to the family.

Beyond were the fields of neighbouring villages, half a hundred of them. The rice-fields began at the walls of the outlying houses and covered with vivid green the level floor of the valley to the bare, reddish hills, thinly reforested in spots with young pine, which bounded it east and west. To the south the valley narrowed to where it debouched from the Nan Ling, the great southern mountains which seemed to float like blue clouds above the mist that rose from the rice-fields.

In the tilling of the soil the Chinese is at one with nature. The countryside was unscarred by roads or open spaces, and the fields followed the contour of the valley, so that from a distance no evidence of cultivation was visible. Great trees left standing in the midst of fields, grave plots, and the irregularity of all boundaries added to the general unstudied effect. It was even an improvement on nature, for all dead wood and other sinister evidences of decay had been removed, so that everything seemed fresh and virginal, as if newly created. The villages were small and often visible only as leafy groves, and the pagoda that sprang from the summit of a distant hill seemed but to express that spirit of aspiration that inheres in mountain tops.

The road leading to Wong Chia was really not a

road at all, but a path surfaced with cobblestones and hardly wide enough for travellers on foot to pass each other. It wound through the expanse of rice which on closer view was revealed as a succession of small fields a few rods wide, planted in regular rows and separated by dikes barely high enough to serve as boundaries and scarcely wide enough for paths. It passed by tiny plots of elephant-ear and castor bean, along little streams fed by the overflow from the rice-fields, and over the narrow stone bridges which spanned them.

The bicycle and its rider were objects of intense curiosity. There are no wheeled vehicles in Kan San, rarely even a wheelbarrow, and men walk, are borne in sedan chairs, or ride in boats. Bamboo rafts are laboriously towed by men up the shallower streams and over rapids. Produce is borne to market on the shoulders of men where water traffic is impossible. The regular day's journey by boat or sedan chair is thirty miles, which, for the great majority, is also the cruising radius of the mind. Therefore the sight of a foreigner riding a machine at many times the customary rate of travel called for a considerable psychological readjustment, and a radical enlargement of the small world of the countryside. Workers in the fields stood and stared as long as he was in sight. Even when he took a header into the mud of a rice-field the amazement of the onlookers was scarcely tinged with amusement. They were in doubt as to whether this might not be a regular feature of this new mode of locomotion.

Little Yang was waiting for him at a distance from the village, seated on a grave mound in the shade of a giant camphor tree, with his cherished foreign hat placed carefully beside him, his round, chubby face so solemn that it seemed wholly void of intelligence, and without a trace of his usual half-impudent schoolboy grin. He was wearing his best gown of blue silk, from which it might be inferred that he considered the situation one to demand their utmost effort. He had not ven-

tured to enter the village before they could join forces, so they paused to take counsel, while an urchin ceased hunting for snails in the warm, shallow water of the rice-fields to come and stare at the foreign devil.

Little Yang had talents which had been the despair of the authorities in the various schools he had attended, one of which he had left by request. But once his ability as a trouble-maker had been redirected along constructive lines he became a most effective pastor. His zeal in his calling, however, did not abate one whit his relish for complications which taxed his ingenuity or involved a contest of wits. Indeed, the chief attraction of his work for him came to be the solution of the constant sharp conflicts between the new spirit and the old ways. In this he displayed a sound and typically Chinese sense of what was most practical and vital in the contribution of Christianity to the life of China.

"We are in for trouble," was his diagnosis, and for once he seemed to find it little to his liking. "The tailor's wife is a superior woman, and she would not have sent for help otherwise."

"What has happened?" asked the missionary.

"I don't know exactly," he replied, "but it is sure to be bad enough. Wong Chia is the worst village in the valley."

Hardly a dozen newspapers were taken in the fifty villages in the valley, and very few of them had schools. That was not because they did not want them, however, for many villages were liberalized by regret for the education which they did not have. Wong Chia was not so. It was the only village that had never had a school. The report was that years ago a half-starved scholar who could not find any other location tried to start a school there and was stoned out of the place. Wong Chia was unlearned and took pride in the fact. In China, where learning is a sacred thing, and even waste scraps of paper bearing the written word are collected and reverently incinerated in the ovens everywhere provided

for the purpose, such a thing is most unusual, and Wong Chia represented the extreme of conservatism.

"I have seen it coming for the last year," continued little Yang, "ever since the tailor began to attend church."

"How did any one from Wong Chia ever happen to become a Christian?" asked John Chatfield.

"Well, you see," said little Yang, "the tailor inherited only three small rooms in the big clan house, and half an acre of land, which is not enough for a living. So in the winter he works at his trade in the surrounding villages and lodges with those who engage his services. Two years ago he spent several days working for Wang Lan Din at Stone Pine."

"That explains it," said John Chatfield.

"Yes," said little Yang. "Stone Pine is the village next to Wong Chia and the tailor had long known Lan Din's reputation for fair dealing and uprightness. He is the only one in his village who can read or write, and he attends to all wills and deeds and marriage settlements for his own village, and many come to him from other villages because they feel that their affairs are safe in his hands. The tailor was touched when Lan Din told him about Christianity, and readily accepted his invitation to go to church at Lotien with him on Sunday. He is a simple-hearted and gentle soul and the doctrine made an immediate and genuine appeal to him. So it came about that when he returned home in the spring to till his limited fields, he and his wife and son had enrolled as enquirers."

"Wong Chia would not be the village to take kindly to their eating the foreign doctrine," remarked John Chatfield. "The tailor and his wife must have known that there was trouble ahead."

"They did, and they had a hard time from the start," replied little Yang. "The tailor is ordinarily very timid. I have been surprised at the way he has endured their mockery and threats. He says nothing, but is in his



place every Sunday at church. There was sure to be a break sooner or later. Now we must hurry and find out just what has happened."

Little Yang picked up his hat and started off at a good pace, and they soon approached the village, outside of which was one of the open spaces so rare in mid-China, the threshing-floor and a bit of greensward, with a few little stacks of straw. Willows, great camphor trees, and elms cast their shade over it, and palms appeared above the yellow mud walls of adjacent courtyards. Here they found the tailor's frightened small son waiting for them. Little Yang questioned him at length, and soon had the full story.

It seemed that things had come to a climax when the village decided to indulge in one of the interminable theatricals which gladden the hearts of gods and men in rural China.

Such exhibitions are given in honour of the gods known as Local Guardians. By a happy coincidence the hearts of the worshippers are so at one with their gods that what gains the divine favor has the additional merit of affording unbounded entertainment to the populace. The play is staged before the temple in full view of the delighted deities, for all temples of any size include a stage on the opposite side of the courtyard facing the great doors. A company of strolling players is engaged, and holds forth for days. Such an event has a most stimulating effect on the prosperity of the village. Crops are benefited, and the Local Guardians, touched by the remembrance of their worshippers and gratified by the quality of the entertainment provided for their delectation, redouble their watchfulness and avert the malign influences that would otherwise result in sickness and misfortune. Not only do the villagers thus win the favour of the gods, but they likewise gain face by providing a spectacle which is enthusiastically patronized by all the surrounding villages.

Such an occasion calls for money, and accordingly an

assessment had been levied, amounting to about thirty cents per family. This the tailor had refused to pay. He was now a Christian, he said, and could no longer participate in any of their religious festivals, could have no part in what was offered to idols.

The village had been incredulous. The thing was unheard of, preposterous. Always they had acted together. They were a clan. The village was a unit. It had always been so. It was impossible for it to be otherwise.

All these things and more they had said to the tailor as they crowded around him in the courtyard of the building where he lived, and angry voices had risen higher and higher. He had eaten the foreign religion, and this was the fruit of it. They did not know much about the foreign religion—that it was foreign was enough for them—but they were clear as to their attitude toward the tailor.

But to all their angry insistence he had returned no reply, and when they had made a point to their own satisfaction, and the clamour died down while they put a direct question to him, he had only shaken his head, seeming more timid than ever. They had gone from arguments to threats, while the tailor had opposed no resistance and had made no effort in his own behalf, but had only shrunk back more and more and eyed them fearfully. Then their exasperation had passed all bounds and they had begun to hustle him toward the gate. Had he raised a hand to defend himself it would have gone hard with him, but the mob had lacked that final provocation to violence. They had surged out of the court, bearing him along, and then some one had suggested that he be tied up until he came to a better frame of mind.

“And where is your father now?” asked little Yang.

“Over there,” replied the boy, pointing to where, beyond the threshing-floor, stood a temple of considerable size, with figures of horsemen in weatherbeaten

reds and blues on its whitewashed walls. "They tied him up in the temple of the Local Guardians."

"Do you mean that he is still there?" asked John Chatfield.

"Yes," said the boy. "My mother didn't dare to do anything until you came. She is waiting for you at our home."

"Lead us to your father first," said John Chatfield.

Little Yang looked doubtful, but followed as the small boy led the way across the threshing-floor to the temple.

Within was twilight, ghostly with the flitting of bats which came and went through a great gap where a part of the roof had fallen in, and thick with the stench of their presence. The stolid, amiable faces of the images showed pale in the gloom, save that half of one had dropped off, exposing the bamboo framework underneath, and lay in fragments on the floor. As their eyes at length became accustomed to the half-light, they made out the patient figure of a man, bound to one of the great pillars that upheld the roof, arms above head, a rope passed round and round both man and pillar, his slack body sagging against its heavy coils.

It was the tailor bound before the faces of the gods he had refused to honour.

For thirty hours he had endured the slow torture of his bonds, the loneliness and isolation of the outcast, and the terrors of night and darkness, when all Chinese know better than to stir out of doors.

"Here is Tu Siensen come to help you," said little Yang, as they reached him.

The tailor turned a haggard face toward them, and looked with steadfast eyes from one to the other, but seemed unable to speak. They tried to talk to him, but he seemed not to understand.

"Let us untie him," said John Chatfield.

"No," said little Yang, decidedly. "Not unless you want the whole village about us like a swarm of hornets. There is sufficient danger of violence without that."

"But we must get him out of this," remonstrated John Chatfield.

"No," repeated little Yang. "If we free him they will set upon him again as soon as we are gone. We must try to persuade them to liberate him themselves.

"I know you have come to help us Chinese," he went on, with boyish earnestness, "but you don't know how hard it is for us. You come out for a little while and see us through some trouble like this, and then you go back to your foreign house in Kan San and are free from it. We have to take day by day all the unpleasant things that our neighbours can say and do. What we must try to bring about is to get the village into a different frame of mind so that the tailor will be able to endure living with them."

"You are right," said John Chatfield, humbly, "but how are we going to persuade them to release him?"

"I don't know," replied little Yang, with a momentary flash of his schoolboy grin. "You must take care of that part of it."

With a final word of encouragement to the unheeding tailor, they followed the solemn little boy across the smooth threshing-floor, back to the road and along a yellow mud wall to the village itself.

The road turned the corner of the wall and became the village street, narrow, cramped, and hemmed in by unsightly buildings afflicted with an architectural eczema where the whitewash and mud coating had peeled off. Scavenger pigs wallowed in the mud and slime ever renewed by the refuse flung out through doors and windows, and dogs, half-naked children, and half-grown chickens, dyed grotesque greens and purples for purposes of identification, disported themselves amid clouds of flies and abundant odours. Their small guide entered a doorway and led them through the maze of rooms and passages of the great clan house. The floors were of mud, damp and dirty from the coming and going of dogs, chickens, and pigs who were perfectly at home

there. The low ceilings were covered with soot, and walls and pillars were dark from the contact of multitudinous hands. The occasional small, high, barred windows let in little light and less air. At length they came to a "heaven well," a courtyard paved with stone, off which opened the communal reception-room, which had a certain touch of that dignity and sense of the fitness of things which is seldom absent from Chinese life, however humble.

Here the tailor's wife had hot tea awaiting their coming, and greeted them politely and with the usual formalities, setting hard-boiled eggs and cakes before them, and not until they had finished their refreshments would she begin her story. She was a plain, pleasant-faced woman of about thirty-five, of evident common sense and strength of character, and made a clear-cut and restrained statement of all that had happened up to the time of their arrival.

"Things might be a lot worse," said little Yang, with an air of relief, when she had completed her narrative. "Probably the only thing that saved the tailor his life, or at least a severe beating, was the fact that he made no resistance whatever. That made an impression, which has been deepened by his steady refusal to give in. It is the tailor against the whole clan. That has not happened before and they hardly understand it, particularly that it should be the timid tailor, of all persons. They seem to have cooled off a bit since yesterday, and perhaps we can do something with them. We are sending for the *deba*, and when he comes we shall see."

Meantime the village began to gather. Heads appeared at the many windows opening on the courtyard. All regarded them with undisguised hostility, and the sound of loud and excited talking came from adjoining rooms. They waited uneasily.

At length came the *deba*, the local constable, with whom they were to discuss the matter as the representative of the village. He proved to be a countryman with

brown, bare legs, voluminous cotton trousers to the knee, and a shrewd eye.

"This is Tu Siensen from Kan San," said little Yang, introducing John Chatfield. The *debaos* bowed clumsily, and they sat down to tea, and the tailor's wife and little Yang engaged him in polite conversation and courteously plied him with cakes and the nuts and candies that were the last word in rural hospitality.

The village, in the person of the *debaos*, and the World Outside, in the persons of the pastor and the missionary, were now face to face. The tailor in the Local Guardian's temple was the pawn in the game. It was time for the next move.

The Chinese people have an admirable assortment of polite observances, which suit all occasions and which enable them to meet in a fitting manner circumstances that would to other peoples be highly embarrassing, these being indeed the Confucian apparatus for the orderly conduct of life, which in Chinese eyes rises almost to the dignity of religion. Therefore John Chatfield was quite content to let little Yang and the other two go through the proper civilities, while he awaited his cue, watching intently, for it was impossible to foretell what turn the situation might take.

"Tu Siensen and I have come to talk with you about the case of the tailor," said little Yang, at length, in the manner of one making an observation on the weather. "The tailor might well go to court with the matter, but we prefer to discuss it with you in a friendly way."

The *debaos* made one of the wholly noncommittal polite sounds with which the Chinese language is plentifully supplied. Little Yang looked at John Chatfield.

"I gather," said he, "that your honourable village has made some objection because the tailor refuses to conform to certain of your ancient customs."

"Yes," said the *debaos* nodding. "Such a thing has never happened here before."

"But your honourable country has recently become a

republic, along with my unworthy country and a number of others. It is the largest republic in the world."

The *debaos* made a polite assent.

"And it has proclaimed freedom of religion for all, has it not?"

"That is true."

"Then is it not also true that the tailor, as a republican citizen, who is guaranteed religious liberty, ought not to be ill-treated for refusing to take part in observances contrary to his conscience?"

"That too is true," the *debaos* replied, "but he has not yet joined the church, and until he actually does so we feel that he should continue to take his part in all our community religious matters."

Little Yang and John Chatfield exchanged glances of relief, and the former took up the conversation.

"But the tailor does not see it that way," he suggested, courteously. "Has he not already suffered enough to counterbalance any payment that he should have made?"

The *debaos* seemed reluctant to make any admission as to what had been done to the tailor, and little Yang swiftly followed up his advantage.

"Suppose you release him and we consider the incident closed," he suggested, boldly.

The *debaos* looked enquiringly at the tailor's wife.

"We are taught forgiveness," said little Yang, and the tailor's wife nodded.

So after considerable further parley the matter was arranged, and the *debaos* summoned several villagers and went to free the tailor.

Little Yang and the others waited anxiously lest the village should, after all, refuse, or raise some further complication. At length the *debaos* returned with two villagers assisting the tailor, who took a place, unsteadily, at the table. The tailor's wife invited the others to sit down to tea, but they had no mind to do so. As they turned to leave, little Yang again urged courteously

but firmly that the matter be dropped and the tailor left in peace.

Only when all the civilities had been observed did the tailor's wife turn to him, and then only to set tea rather formally before him, hiding her anxiety in accordance with the requirements of good form that there be no public expression of feeling between husband and wife.

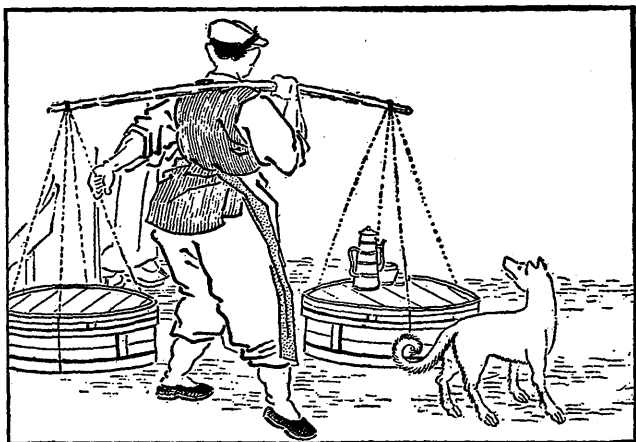
Face to face with the simplicity of the steadfast tailor John Chatfield could think of nothing adequate to say, so he listened while little Yang spoke earnestly of the future. The tailor, too, said nothing, but kept his large, intelligent eyes fixed on little Yang, nodding approval at intervals.

Meanwhile the heads had gradually disappeared from the windows around the court. The talking died away in the adjoining rooms, and at length quiet settled down.

Thus did the village for the first time come to grips with the World Outside. The foreign religion had struck at the foundation of its social system, that clan solidarity which, throughout the Old World, hampers and restricts individual initiative even as the tailor was bound in the temple of the old gods. Perhaps none of those concerned fully realized the far-reaching character of the forces that were at work, and the villagers least of all, save as they instinctively reacted against any departure from the ways of their ancestors.

The village might bind the tailor, but it could not resist the pressure of the changing World Outside.





## VII. THE EYE OF THE EAST

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A group of men were idling in the shade of the gate house, waiting for the foreign shepherd to finish his last items of business and start for the country. The two bearers of the light rattan sedan chair that stood ready were smoking their vicious, yellow, stringy tobacco in pipes with small brass bowls, and stems of sufficient length to prevent its biting them. These were so long, in fact, that the smaller one with the pock-marked face was inserting a lighted match between his toes to ignite a fresh charge in the bowl, which he could not otherwise reach while sucking at the mouthpiece. The other bearer, with an honest, good-humoured face, stretched a huge length on the grass. A carrying coolie was balancing the loads at the two ends of his pole, one consisting of a bedding roll, and the other of food for ten days, for the missionary could never quite learn to subsist exclusively on the coarse country fare without some Western food to supplement it. A servant with a foreign lantern in his hand leaned against the wall, and the ancient gatekeeper sat on his usual bench.

"I go with him ten days, but he keeps you only one day. Why is that?" the carrying coolie, who was making his first trip with John Chatfield, enquired of the chair-bearers.

"I asked him once," said the pock-marked chair-bearer, "why he did not ride in a chair every day, when he had plenty of money."

"He ought to," replied the ancient gatekeeper, who had seen a succession of missionaries come and go in the rambling house that was his pride and the special care of his life. "He comes back sick nearly every time."

"What did he say?" asked the carrying coolie of the chair-bearer.

"He said that the pastor of a church could not call on the members in a chair like an official, and that he could not ride when the pastor walked," replied the bearer.

"Why not?" asked the coolie.

"He could if he wished," said the old gatekeeper. "He is the foreign shepherd in charge of all the churches, and pays the salary of all the other shepherds. I know. They come here to get it. He ought to ride in a chair to indicate his superior position. It would make an impression. The church would gain face."

"He always gets out of the chair and walks uphill," said the big chair-bearer.

"I know why he does not ride all the time," said the servant, importantly. "It is his demmo-crazy."

"What is that?" asked the coolie.

"I hear him preach in all the churches," said the servant, "and he is always saying that all men are equal, and have one Father in the sky."

"You talk like that and say you are a Christian, and yet you 'squeeze' on his provisions," said the old gatekeeper, severely, to the servant.

"He preaches that all men are brothers, but he has more than I have, so I equalize it what I can. That, too, is demmo-crazy," said the servant.

"He is the only *siensen* who treats me as if I were as

good as he is," said the pock-marked bearer, "perhaps, though, he does not know how we Chinese look down upon chair-bearers."

"He knows, all right," said the gatekeeper.

The study door slammed, and a little man in a black-silk jacket over the dress of a master workman emerged, and approached the gate.

"Hu Sifu," said the old gatekeeper, respectfully, "did it go?"

The master carpenter paused and surveyed the group with complacency, while a squint, a sunken scar in his cheek, and scant chin whiskers blended into a crafty leer that for a moment eclipsed his professional expression of candour and simplicity.

"It did," he answered, succinctly. "The foreign shepherd is a simpleton."

"But how could you get the better of him?" asked the gatekeeper. "He always makes a writing."

"This was a change of specifications. He wanted to change the writing. I told him it was not necessary, and the fool believed me," said the master carpenter, triumphantly.

"He is not a fool," said the big chair-bearer, "although he always gets out and walks in the bad stretches."

"But how did you get him to pay fifty dollars for nothing?" asked the gatekeeper. "What did he say?"

"Fifty dollars. A half year's wages," murmured the servant.

"He said," replied the carpenter, "'Fifty dollars is entirely too much, Hu Sifu.'"

"I said, 'That was the agreement.'"

"He said, 'The extra cost for doing it the new way was practically nothing. I would not make any such bargain.'"

"'But I understood it that way,' said I."

"He looked at me in a funny way, for a while, before he said anything more."

"Yes," interrupted the old gatekeeper, "he was thinking that you were lying, but was too polite to say so. It is not safe to talk about lying among foreigners."

"Then," continued the carpenter, "he asked me again: 'Are you sure you so understood me?'"

"'Certain,' said I.

"'Perhaps I did not make it clear,' he said, half to himself. 'I can't speak this local dialect any too well.'"

"Then he paid me the money, the simpleton. It was only my word against his. All he had to do was to refuse and have a bit of a row. I could have done nothing."

The door of the study slammed again and the personal teacher of the missionary advanced to the gate, which the old keeper held open for him. "*Siensen*," said the big chairman, "Hu Sifu here says the foreign shepherd is a fool. Is he?"

The teacher looked them over, and smoothed his grey-silk gown.

"Not exactly," he replied. "He is a graduate of a famous university and he knows our classics. He is not a fool, but he lacks the dignity of the superior man. He is too ready to admit that he is wrong and that makes me lose face as his teacher. He is always thinking about other people, when what he should do is to maintain the dignity of his own position."

"When he thinks we are tired, he gets out and walks, and we can hardly get him into the chair again," said the big chairman. "He does not cut down on the wine money, though, no matter how much he walks."

"He is a fool, and I hope it will be a larger amount next time," said the master carpenter, complacently.

"There won't be any next time. He will have everything with you in writing after this," said the old gatekeeper. "I know him. You can't understand why he treated you that way unless you are a Christian."

"Yes, you can," stated the big chair-bearer, earnestly, looking at the others in turn. "Do you know any one

else who is more afraid of wronging others than he is of being wronged himself?"

There was a pause.

The study door closed softly.

"Hush!" said the ancient gatekeeper. "Get ready. Here he comes."



### VIII. A MATTER OF BOUNDARIES

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When Ma Ko Zong and his friends elected to slaughter a half-score head of cattle on the wrong side of the boundary line between the districts of Kianglu and Kan San, they landed themselves in prison and all but wrecked the evangelistic campaign which little Yang and John Chatfield had long and carefully planned as the beginning of new things in the field of which Lotien was the centre.

Kianglu is a sparsely inhabited district, largely foot-hills from which the forests have long since disappeared, only a small part of which is under cultivation, whereas Kan San is a broad valley, a veritable estuary of paddy-fields from the one margin to the other. From time immemorial China has had severe laws against the slaughtering of the water-buffalo and the cow, which in many parts constitute the only work animals. There was a sound economic reason for this, the object of the law being to secure that the peasants should not sell their work animals during hard times and so have no means of cultivating the next year's crop. Under the republic,

which was then in its fifth year, many of the old regulations were being done away with, and in the district of Kan San, where work animals were many and pasturage very scarce, this law had been repealed. In Kianglu, as there was abundant pasturage for the not too numerous supply of animals, the law continued strictly in force.

All this was perfectly well known to Ma and his friends, but while the restrictions imposed by the law of the land or the proclamations of their rulers are regarded almost with reverence by the Chinese, yet in practical life legality has often been a commodity to be obtained by purchase or personal influence. The location which they chose was on the river, whereas if they had stayed on the legal side of the boundary line they would have incurred charges for transportation to the river which would have eaten up a considerable portion of their profits.

They were not so careless, however, as to overlook sending a proper fee to the head of the police in the *yamen* of the district magistrate of Kianglu, but for some reason the magistrate for once did not act through the police, but directly, and caught the law-breakers red-handed.

Ma and his friends spent several days in prison, after which all were released but the three principals, who were given a sentence of one year each.

Now it happened that Ma was a member of the church at Lotien, one of those who had joined in the good old days when Liu Lin Kong, a black sheep with a brief career in the ministry, was pastor, and the church was known as "Escape Trouble Hall." Ma had not been distinguished for attendance on church, either regular or irregular, for some years, but one touch of trouble brings the wanderers in to any organization that offers a possibility of help, and in the earlier and unregenerate days when Liu Lin Kong and the brotherhood of the Forty Good-for-Nothings had worked hand in hand, all the

small fry of rascallions and transgressors of the law had found the church a very present help in time of trouble.

But times had changed. A new type of better trained pastors was succeeding the pioneers who had done the best they could with the light they had. The one thing that was anathema to John Chatfield was to have any of the preachers go to a *yamen* to use the influence of the church or mission on behalf of any of the numerous miscreants within and without the church who were always getting into trouble and appealing for help. Indeed, it had been necessary to rule that no one should go to the *yamen* under any circumstances, because, as painted by themselves in time of trouble, the most brazen rascals were the victims of persecution for righteousness' sake, and it was practically impossible to get at the actual facts. It was not easy to hold to this rule. On every trip to visit the churches the missionary was daily besought to aid members and their friends and relatives in distress, and there were many cases which had every appearance of being deserving. Sometimes men arose and left the church for good when he refused to give his active help to their lawsuits, where the influence of a prominent person or an organization often counted heavily. Once a woman, who to all appearances was being swindled out of her property, insisted on interrupting a communion service and making a scene when she did not get what she wanted. There was only one way to stop the abuse and make the people realize that the ministry of the church was of another sort, and that was to make no exceptions.

Therefore, when Ma's wife with four small children appeared at the parsonage and poured out her simple tale, little Yang knew that he was in for a bad time of it. At first she was incredulous when he assured her that it was impossible for himself or the missionary to interfere with the process of law and use their influence



to get her husband out of prison. What good was the church if it could not get its members out of jail?

Little Yang, however, bethought himself of the new policies of church work that were being developed and of earnest and emphatic deliverances of the missionary as to this sort of thing, and stood fast in his refusal. Mrs. Ma thereupon abandoned herself to wild-eyed grief, kneeling before him and clutching at his gown, and mingling prayers and recrimination in a piercing voice, while the four children collaborated in spilling tears all over the place.

The pastor stood it as long as he could, and exhausted every effort to calm her. Finally in desperation it occurred to him that he might at least journey to the prison to make Ma a visit and do what he could for him. When he suggested this to the woman, her transports of gratitude were almost as overwhelming as her pleadings.

However, her exhibition of grief did not so distract her mind that she was unable to see the limitations of the promise that he had made, and work out a canny plan to get around them. Summoning three relatives, she instructed them to accompany him and see to it that he accomplished something more than a pastoral call.

At Kianglu they stayed with the pastor of the church there, with whom little Yang, as a newcomer in Kan San, was barely acquainted, but who was well known to the three of the tribe of Ma. This man had been in the pastorate for many years, had been long accustomed to the old ways, and, while theoretically in favor of the newer point of view, could not see why the prejudices of a young and inexperienced missionary should be allowed to stand in the way of succouring a brother in distress.

Little Yang tried to protest, but he was swept along by the others under the lead of the older minister. After a visit to the prison he found himself, almost before he

knew it, in the presence of the district magistrate, where even his silence seemed to give tacit reinforcement to the vigorous representations of the others.

The missionary, who had been away during the course of these events, received information concerning them immediately upon his return. He could not well afford to dismiss the two preachers, particularly as it would be impossible to replace them, but it was essential to take some action sufficiently drastic to ensure that there would be no recrudescence of the old bad practice of preachers interfering in the name of the church with due process of law.

He finally hit on a scheme that he felt would make the two concerned lose so much face that they would never venture to go to a *yamen* again. Dropping everything else, he made the journey to Kianglu and called on the official. He reminded him of the coming of the two ministers, and stated that they had exceeded their authority and gone contrary to the policy of the church. He assured him that the mission emphatically did not wish to interfere in legal matters, and only desired impartial justice for the members of the churches.

Returning to Kan San, he went his way, and said nothing of the matter to either of the men concerned.

The church at Lotien had completed fifty years, and a three-day conference was held to commemorate the anniversary, which was a great success. After many long years of discouragement and opposition, the church had at length come to better days, and it was planned to follow the conference with an evangelistic campaign which should carry the gospel into the whole countryside and be the beginning of larger things.

All of the churches were well represented at the celebration. Unfortunately, the worst elements were also in evidence. When early on the morning after the closing of the conference, the missionary was told that a group of the delegates wanted to have an informal conference

on a certain matter, he found himself confronted chiefly by hangers-on and that part of the constituency which was prepared to do battle against the reforms which he was endeavouring to bring about. There were Liu Lin Kong, former pastor, Small Ox, one of the leading lights among the Forty Good-for-Nothings, and no end of friends and relatives and neighbours of the imprisoned Ma Ko Zong. Most of these were not members of the church, but many members were present, some out of fear of the Forty Good-for-Nothings, with which Ma was closely connected, if not a member, and some because they did not favor the policies of the new pastor and missionary, which they only partly understood and which, they felt, would subvert the established order of things. The better elements, however, seemed content to keep in the background.

It was Ma's case that was up, and they were determined to see that something was done about it. They had learned of the visit of the missionary to the magistrate, and resented his attempt to cut them off from the succour of the church in time of trouble. They tried to make out that it was a case of religious persecution, citing the fact that nearly all of those who had been arrested had been released, Ma being held because he was a Christian. The missionary, however, pointed out succinctly that the other two who were held were not Christians, and that their statement had no ground in fact. He went further and took advantage of the occasion to define the position of the mission, that men should join the church for what they could put into it, not for what they could get out of it.

At this the crowd ceased to attempt to argue, and demanded that he interfere and by one means or another secure the release of the imprisoned member. He tried to explain and reason with them, but they only became more and more turbulent and boisterous, the more insolent and rowdy of them doing most of the talking. Finally one of the church members from Ma's village

pushed his way to the front and faced him in an angry and threatening manner.

"If you don't get our brother out of jail," he shouted, "you needn't come to our village with your evangelistic campaign."

And one after another, voices in the crowd echoed him.

"Nor to our village."

"Nor to ours."

The missionary was dismayed. There could be no question but that they meant it. The lower elements were in the majority and controlled the crowd, but the sentiment had been repeated by a sufficient number of members to threaten seriously the wrecking of the evangelistic campaign, and perhaps of all further effort for a long time to come. All were in an angry mood, stirred up, indeed, almost entirely by those who had something to gain by it, but none the less menacing for all that.

Their outburst over, the crowd fell silent, awaiting his reply. It seemed clear that nothing could be accomplished by further argument, so he stated briefly his regret that it was impossible, and turned and left them.

The evangelistic campaign was to be conducted by the pastors of the eight churches in the Kan San field, and gathering these together, John Chatfield, with a sore heart, started off.

Once outside the village, the little group stopped under a clump of trees, where they were sheltered from the slow rain that was falling, and went over the situation. It was gloomy enough. Some of the older pastors were inclined to hint that it would have been wiser to give in, but the missionary said resolutely that it would be better to begin the work all over again than to continue in the old bad way.

Little Yang wept openly as he thought of the miscarriage of all his fine plans, and the check to the work,

while John Chatfield, watching him, thought of the change since the time that Yang had almost put an end to all that he stood for and even his own usefulness in the Kan San field.

After letting them talk in their own way for a while, so as to see how the situation appeared to them, with no result except a deepening of the general gloom, the missionary called a sort of council of war. He said that they must begin the work in such villages as might still be open to them, and meantime endeavour to find some means of conciliating the others. He argued that after the delegates separated the better element would realize that they had been swept along by the rest and would repent of having repudiated the work for which they had been preparing so long, particularly as they had shot their bolt.

To this there was general agreement, but the group of pastors, with deeper knowledge of Chinese psychology, insisted that some concession must be made by the missionary, at least enough to save the face of those who would have to go back on their public declaration.

Accordingly, a proposition was worked out whereby the missionary was to write a letter to the district magistrate of Kianglu stating that in visiting him it had not been his idea to oppose clemency being shown to the prisoner, Ma, but simply that the case be handled entirely on its merits, not discriminating either in favor of or against the said Ma on account of his being a Christian.

This the missionary readily agreed to, and it was decided that two of the ministers be sent as ambassadors to the disaffected villages. The question was then taken up of beginning the evangelistic campaign. The plan had been to spend the morning at Wong Chia and the afternoon and evening at Stone Pine. All agreed that this could still be followed out, for Wong Chia was always a hostile village at best, and as to the attitude of Wong Lan Din at Stone Pine there was no question.

So the little group made their discouraged way through the rain to Wong Chia, where the tailor and his wife cheered them up by receiving them with pleasure, and acted with dignity as hosts to them and to a considerable portion of the village, who relaxed their hostility sufficiently to listen quietly throughout the whole morning, while one preacher after another held forth. At Stone Pine, Wong Lan Din presided, and the whole population listened attentively for hours, for the afternoon was too rainy for work in the fields.

Here the two pastors returned with the word that the better elements in the two or three villages that they had been able to visit regretted the affair of the morning, and realized that they had been in the wrong, and that the way was open to go to Dang San and a neighbouring village the next day. However, all had misgivings as to how they would be received.

These doubts were dissipated the following day, for they were cordially welcomed and in the evening, at Dang San, invited to partake of what amounted to a veritable feast. When the time came to depart, the missionary took up the matter of payment for their entertainment, for it had been announced in advance that the mission would pay at a regular rate for all meals, as feeding eight or ten men for a day would be too heavy a burden for the members, whose average family budget was sixty dollars per year, and few of whom could do more than make both ends meet. To his surprise, Dang Yin Fang, the leading member there, and the others courteously but firmly refused, saying that they had clubbed together to provide for their guests. The missionary insisted, fearing that this might put an end to work of the sort, because next time they might not feel able to afford having a large band visit the village, but they continued in their refusal, saying, "If all of you can come to help our village, we want to have a part in it."

And thus it was throughout the thirteen villages in

which the church at Lotien had members. By day, in one village after another, all who were not at work in the fields came and listened for hours. Nights the missionary perched precariously on tables and operated the stereopticon, using the whitewashed side of a house as a screen, while the people from all the near-by villages followed them around night after night, and listened for hours and became still as one preacher after another earnestly unfolded the life and death of the Saviour of all men.

So once again the group that sought to use the church for their own selfish ends were defeated, and the church more clearly took its place as a new social agency, distinct from gang and clan, and of a radically different spirit.



## IX. THE LOAN OF A LAMP

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A diminutive and smoky tin lamp diffused a translucent gloom, through which appeared, dimly, the soot-stained whitewashed walls, clay floor, and unpainted rafters of the modest reception-room of the village of Stone Pine, and the figures seated at the eight fairy table.

At the head sat a living replica of one of the stone sculptures of the Han dynasty in the person of the host. He was of stocky build, dressed in loose flowing garments, and his round impassive face was topped by a thick felt hat which flared outward like a saucer and brought into relief his typical Chinese graven image of a face with its kindly lines and ready smile.

This was Wong Lan Din, the only one in the little village of fifty souls who could read or write, and he could read very little and could not write very much. He was a simple and intelligent countryman with a good deal of homely common sense and was trusted by the village in all affairs having to do with property and the making of contracts and other written instruments.



He took great pride in this in his honest, serious way.

His guests were the pastors of the churches in the Kan San district, together, with the missionary, who had been preaching for three hours to the entire population of the village, and were now refreshing themselves with tea, while the village recuperated in expectation of two hours more in the evening with the stereopticon. This was the first day of a campaign in which the group was spending a half-day in each of the thirteen villages where the Lotien church had members.

Wong Lan Din was the only member of the church in the little village, and he had invited the preachers there as his guests, and the village to come and listen. It being a rainy day, when work in the fields was difficult, the response had been unanimous.

Lan Din lived in three rooms of the large building that comprised a good part of the village, and owned two acres of land, from which he made a living for himself and wife and five children only by the hardest toil. In Kan San work animals are not used in the fields except for ploughing and cultivating, and even most of that in smaller fields is done by hand. Lan Din himself had much of the strength and endurance of the ox.

As he was urging tea and cakes upon his guests, John Chatfield spoke of the campaign which they were conducting in all of the villages and what it might mean to the church and to each locality.

"We can come here in this way only once in a long while," he said; "you are here all the time. Can not you do something to follow up the work that we have begun today? Is there not some way of getting some of your fellow villagers together and interesting them in Christianity?"

Lan Din concentrated for a bit, looking more like a graven image than ever. Then he turned to John Chatfield with his reply.

"The thing that they need most is to learn to read. If they could do that they could study the Bible for themselves and so make progress. I think the first thing we should do is to start a night school."

Now illiteracy is no simple problem in China. The Chinese language contains forty-seven thousand characters. Each one is the picture of an idea, some naïve and picturesque, as when sun and tree are written together to make a picture of the sun rising beyond a tree, meaning "east," while others are as arbitrary and complicated as a Chinese puzzle.

The language is rendered still further complex by the fact that the talk of the home and the street is considered quite beneath the dignity and classical profundity of the printed page, where a different vocabulary is in use. Thus the dog in the street is familiarly spoken of as "*geo*," but, having broken into the printed page, becomes the classical "*chwan*." It is as if the six-year-old in the first primary, instead of learning that "d-o-g" spells "dog," should be compelled to substitute "c-a-n-i-n-e." Innumerable other transformations render the written language a veritable topsy-turvy land, as when the verb "is" becomes the demonstrative pronoun "this," and the conjunction "and" sets up in business as a period.

Of the four hundred million, less than ten per cent are able to read or write. It is far too formidable a task to be accomplished by any save those who can spend some years in school. So when one of the Chinese professors in a mission college succeeded in making a selection of five hundred characters out of the five thousand in daily use, and got out a series of text-books for popular education, using only this limited number, it was hailed as a stroke of genius, and indeed was a modest forerunner of the movement to make the spoken language also the literary language which has since swept the country.

Little Yang and John Chatfield had been talking night

schools as a part of their advance program in the Lotien field, but a night school at Stone Pine had not occurred to them as a possibility, optimists though they were. Therefore John Chatfield heard Lan Din's proposal with interest, but without enthusiasm, and had little of encouragement to offer.

"I quite agree with you," said he, politely. "The ability to read is of fundamental importance. But it seems to me that there are serious difficulties. In Lotien, where we are opening a night school in the chapel, there are a number of scholars who have promised to come and teach one night a week each. In Dang San the teacher of the primary school is going to help. But here you are the only one that can read or write. How could such a school be carried on?"

Lan Din had his reply ready.

"If you will loan me a big foreign lamp," he said, "I will carry on the school."

"And I," put in little Yang, "will come one night a week and help."

Now it was John Chatfield's main aim in life to develop workers and encourage initiative. He would not have ventured to ask little Yang or any other minister to travel abroad regularly after dark. It simply was not done. Little Yang's offer surprised and touched him, but concerning the plan he still had his doubts.

"There would be considerable expense in connection with the school," he said. "How could that be taken care of?"

Again Lan Din had his reply ready.

"The students will provide their own text-books and I will provide the oil for the lamp and the incidentals."

"But what will the church get out of it?" asked An Yu Lo, of Puko, senior member of the group of preachers in the Kan San district.

"It is not a question of what we can get out of it, but of what can put into it," replied little Yang. "Do you want our church to be a selfish church? Should not

the church seek to do something for our country regardless of any benefit that may come to it in consequence?"

"That is right, and we must do something for this village," said Lan Din.

And so it was agreed, and announcement was made that evening and notices posted, that a night school would be conducted at Stone Pine by the church, with Wong Lan Din in charge.

On visiting Stone Pine a month later, the missionary found the night school going full blast. Little Yang came early and coached Lan Din on the lessons for the following week, drilling him on the characters which he did not know. After supper the students came in, thirteen in all, ranging from an urchin of seven years to a clumsy clodhopper of twenty-four. All were men and boys. It did not occur to any one to include girls, nor would it have been practical or free from serious embarrassment under the conditions. The lamp was suspended from the ceiling in the midst of Lan Din's one living-room, into which students and teachers were tightly packed around a table that took up most of the space. Little Yang conducted a brief service, and then school work continued for two hours. Lan Din was not a great success as a teacher, but what he lacked in skill he made up in seriousness and devotion, supplemented by the interest and deadly earnestness of his amateur students.

About the middle of the period a wandering insect blundered into the lamp chimney and caught fire and, as Lan Din went to get another chimney, little Yang explained that they had lost chimney after chimney in this way and that it was a heavy drain on Lan Din's resources.

After study came recitation, most of which was blundering and painful, several of the younger boys, however, doing quite well. The oldest member of the class

proved utterly unable to recite, and wept bitterly in spite of all the encouragement that Lan Din and little Yang could offer.

After the first hour, the class began to get sleepy. All of them, including the teacher, had been hard at work in the fields ever since dawn, and the unaccustomed mental toil and the closeness of the narrow room added to their fatigue. The teacher, however, was indefatigable in keeping them at it, encouraging some, helping others, and in one way or another getting the evening's work done.

And so it went on night after night, week after week, month after month, for eight months. The oldest member of the class was the first to give up. Others grew discouraged one by one, and in spite of the urging and encouragement of Wong Lan Din and little Yang, who was indefatigable in looking up absentees, gradually abandoned hope of finishing the course of study. Lan Din, however, kept doggedly at it. It was his ambition that his village should rise above the level of illiteracy.

How much it cost him for oil and lamp chimneys no one ever learned, for he made no reference to it, but it must have been far more than could be afforded by a simple farmer supporting a family of seven on two acres of ground.

Four of his thirteen pupils completed the course and participated in the graduating exercises which were held at the church at Lotien for the three night schools, and it was a proud moment when they came to their share in the program, a song which they rendered with an amazing disregard for the tune but with the same earnestness that had characterized the whole undertaking.



## X. A QUESTION OF FACE

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One Sunday morning when John Chatfield arrived in Lotien, he was met by little Yang with the statement that Dang Yin Fang, of the village of Dang San, was going to request him to help in securing redress through the courts for injuries done his son. Before he had time to give him further details, Yin Fang himself appeared and, after rather brief polite preliminaries, launched into a statement of his case.

Yin Fang was a tall, somewhat spare man, with a thin black moustache and a rather chilly smile. He looked neither at pastor nor at missionary, but, as Chinese often do under such circumstances, spoke impersonally as if before an audience and acting a part.

"A number of young men of our village attacked my son. They beat him with carrying-poles. He had no possibility of defending himself. They were too many. They left him unconscious, and for some days we despaired of his life. He is even now unable to walk. I want you to help me secure justice."

"Who did it?" enquired John Chatfield.

"It was a dark night; he could not recognize any one."

"When did it happen?"

"It was on the night of your last visit to Dang San."

John Chatfield had most pleasant memories of that night. He had visited Dang San many times, but always briefly, being under the necessity of returning to Lotien before dark. As this had been the first occasion when he was staying over into the evening, he had availed himself of the opportunity to see something of the place. Just before sunset he had ascended the hill from which the village takes its name, and from its low summit looked out across the green valley toward Lotien, where one village after another uprose out of the mosaic of the rice-fields, while to the west the more hilly district of Kianglu began just beyond a yellow river which flowed from the lofty southern hills, which were only a few *li* distant. On the summit of the hill was a little shrine to the local deity, and a little lower down was a threshing-floor where a good breeze was always available for winnowing grain. About the base of the hill curved the little village with its single street and its whitewashed buildings, wedged in between the rocks of the hillside and the ooze of the paddy-fields. Several men were just finishing their work at the threshing-floor, small boys were bringing the water-buffaloes in from the fields, and the village was settling down quietly for the evening.

After supper he had gone to the ancestral hall of the village, where a crowd had already assembled. On one side the spirit tablets of all of the ancestors of the village for many generations were arranged in long dusty tiers, almost to the ceiling. In the centre at rough desks were seated the forty students of the night school which had been established by little Yang. On the platform sat the teacher of the local school, one of the leading men in the village, with a New Testament in his hand. All

other available space was filled by the crowd and it seemed as if the whole village were present. Just below the platform had stood Yin Fang, deacon of the church in Lotien and substantial farmer of Dang San. It was Yin Fang and his brother Yin Mo who were guaranteeing the expenses of the school, and he looked upon the assembly with a pleased smile of proprietorship. In the front row had sat his son, a handsome lad of sixteen.

First there had been a service and, as little Yang had eloquently presented the message of salvation, and its results in the way of education, social improvement, and better citizenship, the village had listened with interest. John Chatfield had been conscious of a deep feeling of satisfaction. In no other village had he been able to secure such coöperation, or find such wide-open opportunity to win the good will of all.

After the brief service had been concluded the people who had been attracted by the coming of visitors had gradually dispersed and school work had begun. Little Yang had spent his time in checking up on the work of the local teachers whom he had persuaded to volunteer their services one evening of the week each, and in exhorting the students, most of whom were young farmers who soon became sleepy and were often inclined to get discouraged and give up. Nine o'clock, a very late hour in rural China, had struck before little Yang had said good-bye to the night-school students, and to Yin Fang and his son among the last, and they had started on their *ten-li* tramp back to Lotien, weary, but elated over the success of their work.

John Chatfield thought of all this as he looked at Yin Fang sitting sternly opposite him, and wondered what might be behind this unexpected circumstance, and what it might lead to.

Little Yang made the suggestion that they see the boy himself, which they proceeded to do. He had been brought to Lotien that morning in a wicker basket suspended from a pole and carried by two men, and was



only the memory of his usual merry self. His father stripped off his shirt and showed his body black and blue and a mass of bruises. Although ten days had passed, he was still a fit subject for a hospital.

"Why should your neighbours beat him in this way? What has he done?" John Chatfield enquired, turning to Yin Fang.

"Nothing," was the reply.

"But surely they accused him of something or other; they would hardly do a thing of this sort for nothing at all."

"That they accused him is true," replied Yin Fang, "but it was a false accusation."

"What was their accusation, then?"

Yin Fang looked uneasy, so little Yang took up the tale. They accused him, he said, of having improper relations with the daughter of one of Yin Fang's neighbours, one of his best friends.

"What do you know with regard to this?" enquired John Chatfield of Yin Fang.

"I have enquired carefully," said Yin Fang, "and I am sure that the accusation is ungrounded."

Then he started in all over again on another set speech. Little Yang looked at John Chatfield, who looked at his watch and tactfully suggested that it was about time for services to begin and that, as they were having a number of baptisms, it would not do to delay, but that they would go into the matter again after the noon meal. Whereupon Yin Fang thanked them, smiled his austere smile, and withdrew.

The two friends looked at each other for a while without speaking.

"You had better talk to the boy immediately after service is over," said little Yang.

"But has not Yin Fang already told us all of the circumstances?"

"None the less, you had better question the boy closely. Yin Fang wanted to go to you in Kan San a week ago,

but I told him to wait until you came here today, and bring the boy as evidence."

It was obvious that little Yang had ideas concerning the situation which he did not care to put into words, so John Chatfield was content to follow his lead, as usual.

At the close of the service the pastor led the way immediately to the room where the boy was stretched out. Before his father or any of the others could interrupt they began to question him, and shortly, scarcely to the surprise of little Yang but much to the dismay of John Chatfield, received his naïve confession. John Chatfield's first concern was for the boy and girl, but he could not help but think of the promising work which had been begun at Dang San, and of the blight that this would put upon it, for although the boy himself was not a Christian, he was the son of one of the leading members in the church.

When Yin Fang arrived in the study a few minutes later, the missionary confronted him immediately with his son's confession. Yin Fang seemed little surprised, but found nothing to say.

After waiting for a moment to give him an opportunity for any explanation, the missionary began earnestly to present to him the seriousness of the situation.

"You are the one who is in the wrong," he said. "The beating which your son has received is no more than was coming to him, and you, as a Christian, should seek to make restitution and set things right. You ought not come to me and try to get the church to interfere on your side and add one wrong to another."

This was pretty straight talk for China, where the demands of courtesy usually call for an indirect approach when dealing with embarrassing matters.

"Thus far," he continued, earnestly, "this has been a very bad thing for the work and influence of the church, but we must take advantage of it to demonstrate what

Christianity really is. When a Christian has done a wrong, he must admit it and make it right. If you will do this it will be a surprise to the people in your village and will be better than many sermons. The thing for you to do is to go at once to your friend, acknowledge that you are in the wrong, and tell him that you are prepared to do anything in your power to make amends, both to the girl and to the clan."

John Chatfield had spoken feelingly, for he realized that their most promising work was at stake. But at the same time he was more than ever aware of the inexorable demands of face and the magnitude of the concession he was asking. It was not merely a question of right and wrong, but involved Yin Fang's prestige and standing as a leading man of his village.

Yin Fang thought for a long moment, his face a mask to the two who watched him anxiously. Then he turned to the missionary with his half-smile.

"You are right with regard to Christianity," he remarked, "and I will do as you say."

Both little Yang and John Chatfield could hardly express their relief, and the missionary offered their services in talking the matter out, although he noticed that little Yang did not seem to welcome the idea.

After returning to Kan San the seriousness of the case grew upon him so that he sent a messenger to little Yang to urge him to go forthwith to Dang San and bring about an amicable settlement of the whole matter as rapidly as possible. Little Yang, however, had no taste for a situation where the church had lost so much face, and considered it wiser to keep out of the whole matter until Yin Fang should have made his own settlement. On second thought John Chatfield realized the wisdom of this. For centuries in China the individual has been subordinated to the family, and on the other hand the family has been held responsible for the individual, all its members frequently being punished for the crime of one. While the laws of the republic had changed this,

it was still the point of view of rural China, and any settlement was certain to be along family lines. It seemed, therefore, better to leave Yin Fang to make his own arrangement, rather than seek an adjustment upon the more individualistic lines that the church has followed in the West.

Yin Fang took his son to his old friend, the father of the girl, and with straightforward dignity made acknowledgment of wrong and offer of restitution. This was received with general surprise, for had not the male relatives of the girl already taken the law into their own hands and wrought vengeance upon the body of the son of Yin Fang, and was not that sufficient? The girl's father, however, received them with kindness, and when the formalities had been completed, the two old friends settled down to discuss details. The welfare of the girl was, in the eyes of all, a minor consideration in comparison with the prestige of both families. All agreed as to the fitness of hastening her marriage, which indeed had already been arranged for by her family, so as to save as much face as possible. She had already eaten much bitterness over the matter, and this indeed would be her life-long portion. As to the boy, it was conceded by all that he had been adequately punished.

This provided for the individuals. There now remained the important question of family. At this point, however, a difficulty arose. Yin Fang had had the courage to accept loss of face and admit the wrong on his side, but he insisted that they acknowledge the injury to his son. The beating they readily admitted, but could not see their way to declaring themselves to be in error, when the first wrong was not with them, and custom and public opinion fully justified them in taking the law into their own hands. So arrangements for an adjustment that would finally and publicly settle in the eyes of the village the status of the affair and the face of all concerned, came to a deadlock.

When at length it began to look as if all Yin Fang's

well-meant endeavours to complete a settlement would come to naught, he came to little Yang for help. He, after some parley, hit on the brilliant idea of having both sides contribute an equal amount toward the cost of the feast of reconciliation, which is the invariable outward symbol of such events in China. Thus, technically, each side gave a feast to the other. Both thereby acknowledged that they were in error, and the whole matter was brought to a friendly settlement.

Nor did it fail of note that the church did not invariably back its members, as did other associations, and as so many thought it should, but that it insisted on what was right regardless of any consideration of self-interest or question of face.



## XI. THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

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The road, which like all roads in Kan San, was only a wide path surfaced with cobblestones, skirted a grove of bamboo and led up to a small village composed of a few houses on one side of the road huddled in the deep shade of monstrous camphor trees. Before it was a crowd, with some one moving about in the midst, from which came the insistent throb of a drum.

As little Yang and John Chatfield came up they found the villagers standing in a circle, while a large man with a sickly false moustache on a lifeless face circled with strange mincing steps and uncouth gestures. Over his shoulders he had a carrying-pole from each end of which bundles of twisted noxious herbs were suspended. Back and forth and round and round he went, timing his steps to the rapid beat of a little drum which he carried.

The villagers looked on from a respectful distance. There was something unhuman about the man, and, indeed, about the whole performance. This impression may have arisen from some indefinable lack in the coun-

tenance of the man, or from a feeling of disgust at a certain animal contrast between his bulk and the mincing character of his gait, but was perhaps more akin to the uneasiness that was visible on the faces of many of the bystanders. The missionary could feel, deep within himself, the contagion of the superstitious fear that surged through the tense crowd.

Without a pause little Yang passed around the crowd and continued on his way.

"Let us stop and look on for a moment," suggested the missionary.

"No," said little Yang, "we had better hurry along."

This he did with rapid strides, and it was only when they were well clear of the village that the missionary caught up with him.

"Now what was the meaning of all that?" he enquired. "What was the man doing?"

"Expelling demons from a haunted house."

"His face looked as if he were familiar with the powers of darkness."

"Yes, some of these Wu can do very strange things."

"Practising that kind of a profession must develop a queer psychology in one who believes in the actual efficacy of his work."

"I have never really known one, but most people fear them very much."

"I have heard that numbers of Taoist priests are really insane," said John Chatfield. "Do you suppose the same thing is true of men of this character?"

"I think it likely," said little Yang.

As they went on John Chatfield thought as to how Chinese life touches the unseen powers of darkness at many points. Thus no house is without a wall in front of the main entrance to prevent the ingress of demons who, it is believed, travel only in straight lines. Daily and hourly watchfulness is necessary to avert malign influences, and an elaborate system of observances has grown up to safeguard the life of human beings.

"That is the way we got our chapel at Lotien," said little Yang, breaking in on his musings.

"I knew that exorcism played a part in the life of the early church," said the missionary, "but I did not know that we had gone in for it in Kan San."

"Not in the way that you mean," said little Yang, with a grin. "The Hu family, a part of whose clan house we bought and made over into chapel and parsonage, are unusually superstitious. They thought it was haunted and we got the whole property for the sum of sixty-four dollars."

"It amounted to the same thing in the end, I suppose," said John Chatfield, "for using it as a chapel has certainly put an end to its being haunted, at least so far as all connected with the church are concerned."

"Yes," said little Yang, "our members have very largely put belief in demons behind them."

"That is what the doctors in our hospital tell me," said John Chatfield. "They say that after the first night alone, most people put in private rooms ask to be transferred to the ward where they have the company of other people at night, but that this happens much less frequently in the case of Christians."

"I have heard the same thing," said little Yang.

"You are an example of it yourself," said John Chatfield. "I know of no one else in Kan San who would go regularly after dark, as you do, to visit night schools. I would not venture to ask any of the others to go out at night that way."

"We Chinese have the custom of staying at home after dark, particularly in country districts like Kan San," said little Yang, modestly.

"It is more than that," said his friend. "I think it means that you have completely overcome the fear of the powers of darkness."

"I would not say that," said little Yang, judicially. "It is this way. I know perfectly well that there are no such things as demons. I studied about it in high school and



in the seminary. But as a matter of fact, there are fears that we get as children which are a part of us. It is that way with me. While I know that there is nothing in it, and while I do not give way to it, I cannot help an occasional feeling of fear. You should not expect too much of new Christians. No matter how genuine and sincere we may be, it takes time for the new spirit to eradicate the old ways."

"I suppose it is because these fears go so far back into the past."

"It is this way, as I see it," said little Yang, earnestly. "We are not born with these fears, but acquire the greater part of them from what we see and feel in our parents when we are little. My wife and I are seeing to it that our children grow up free from any fear of the kind. I think that in two or three generations we should be able to eradicate it."

"What is it that Chinese fear most?" asked John Chatfield, conversationally.

As little Yang started to reply, they entered the outskirts of the village of Lotien and were instantly subject to the noisy attentions of numerous dogs. One of these, sensing a foreigner, made straight for him without a sound, and bit him severely, and the ensuing hubbub put an end to conversation for the time being.

A week or two later little Yang and the missionary returned at dusk to the parsonage at Lotien from a long, hot day of visitation, and sat down to a refreshing cup of tea.

They had hardly done so when one of the lesser members of the clan of Hu, next door, came in to ask that the foreign shepherd would come immediately.

This was an unexpected request. The church had had a succession of difficulties with the clan, and relations had been strained for some time, although those of the clan who were members of the church, or enquirers, still maintained their usual friendly attitude.

"Who wants him?" enquired little Yang.

"It is Hu Lay San."

"And who is that?" enquired John Chatfield.

Little Yang explained that this was one of the younger members of the clan who had, during the last years of the Manchu dynasty, taken his degree and had been occupying an important, though subordinate, post in the *yamen* of the district magistrate in a neighbouring province, but who had recently returned home. He said that he had not met him, and was unable to say what manner of man he was.

"What does he want the foreign shepherd for?" he enquired, turning again to the messenger.

"He did not say."

"But surely you know?"

"I cannot tell you," said the messenger, uneasily.

Little Yang turned with a doubtful expression upon his face and said in an undertone: "I do not like the looks of this. It is bound to be something unpleasant or they would tell us what it is. It may be that it is some trick or that they have some plan to get back at us. Ever since they tried to take the chapel away from us at the time of the death of old Lo San they have been watching for an opportunity."

"I think I had better go, anyway," said John Chatfield, "and then we will see what it is all about."

He finished his tea hurriedly and followed the messenger into the street and through the great gate into the series of courts and buildings that constituted the home of the clan of Hu. He had never been there before and was curious to see the fastness of the tribe that had caused the church so much trouble.

They entered first a court with buildings of one storey on both sides and a higher building ahead. Passing through the main room of this, they came to a larger court before the main hall, which rose considerably above two storeys and was a landmark throughout that part of the valley. Its roof was borne on red-painted

pillars eighteen inches in diameter, which had been brought with great labor and expense from the mountains to the south. The hall had been built two hundred years previously and represented the combined strength and resources of the clan. Thus while the individual families lived in narrow quarters and in comparative poverty, the clan in its communal strength rose to the dignity of a structure beside which the chapel was insignificant.

They passed through other courts and passages and at last his guide conducted him into a guest-room where tea was set before him, and went and called to his master that the foreigner had come.

In a few minutes he returned and summoned him. They came to a dark staircase. The servant motioned to him to go ahead, but did not himself follow. This seemed strange, but after a moment's hesitation he went up and at the top turned abruptly into a large room. The windows were open and the wind was blowing through. None the less, the air had strongly the odour and closeness of a sick-room. The room itself was bare. The first thing he noted was a gentleman beautifully dressed, charmingly courteous, who advanced to meet him. Then he became aware of a dead man lying on a couch at the side of the room.

The gentleman was a product of the best type of Chinese culture. His delicate hands and long finger nails betokened the scholar and perhaps the artist. This was borne out by the sensitiveness of his face and the exquisiteness of his simple dress. He greeted the missionary gravely and somehow John Chatfield got the impression that behind the decorous calm of his perfect courtesy was some grief or great anxiety. This was only a fleeting intuition which he did not have time to analyse, for his host came at once to the point without preliminaries.

"I have sent for you," he said, "to tell me whether that man," making a slight motion toward the figure on the cot, "is dead or not."

John Chatfield bowed and went at once to make an investigation, although there seemed little need of it. The man had very evidently been dead for some hours. This he reported to the gentleman, who thanked him and bowed him to the head of the stairs.

The servant conducted him back to the guest-room, where there was more tea. There he enquired as to the fee. John Chatfield stated that there was, of course, no charge, after which he was escorted back to the chapel.

He related in detail to little Yang what had happened, who said that he had learned that Hu Yo Liang, the uncle of the man who had sent for him, had died that afternoon after a very brief illness.

During the evening meal they discussed the whole matter with considerable speculation as to why he had been sent for. The man was so evidently dead that there seemed to be little need of having a doctor to confirm what anyone could see. Then Hu Lay San, like all classical scholars, would have a good knowledge of Chinese medicine. Why should he want a medical opinion from the Western point of view? Was that what he really was after? While they were still talking it over before saying good night, the same man returned with the same request.

"What does he want this time?" asked little Yang.

"I do not know," replied the servant, uneasily.

"What has taken place?"

"I cannot say, only that Hu Siensen has asked me to request the foreign shepherd to come at once."

The strangeness of the whole proceeding aroused conjectures and misgivings. They were in doubt as to why he had been called in the first place, or what reason there should be for summoning him a second time.

"I still have a suspicion that it is some sort of a trick," said little Yang. "I think I had better go instead."

"But that would look as if I did not trust them," John Chatfield replied, "or that I was afraid."

"I can go and have a look at things," said little Yang, "and then send back for you if necessary."

"I think I had better go," said John Chatfield, and arose to follow the messenger.

Once more he was conducted through the same labyrinthan passages to the stairway, where the servant again remained behind while he ascended to the upper room with the same gentleman to greet him and the corpse lying there in the ghostly light of two candles exactly as he had left it. Again it seemed to him that when Hu Lay San greeted him his mask of courtesy and conventional politeness barely covered something strange underneath.

"I fear that I have inconvenienced you very much," he said, "but I wanted to ask whether you are entirely certain that the man here," again making the same imperceptible gesture toward the motionless figure on the cot, "is really dead."

The missionary assured him that he was certain of it, but he asked him once more to make an investigation. This he did briefly and turned to him and reported.

"He is dead. There can be no question of it whatever."

"But you have not yet tested it with your instrument. Have you not an instrument for listening to the beating of the heart?"

John Chatfield explained that he was not a doctor and had no stethoscope, but that by holding his hand above the heart he could be quite certain in the matter. This he did. Not that it was necessary, but to humour his host, who was evidently labouring under some strange excitement.

"The man is completely dead. He has been dead for some time," he reported.

"Are you sure?" he insisted.

"Entirely sure."

Whereupon he again bowed him to the head of the stairs. John Chatfield wanted to enquire as to what he had in mind, but his manner gave him no opening.

Again the servant was waiting at the foot of the stairs, made the same enquiry as to fee, and then led the way back.

Shortly after midnight they were wakened by an insistent knocking on the gate, which turned out to be the same man with the same request. Little Yang was very doubtful as to the wisdom of going again at that time of night, but both agreed that they had never refused to answer a call and should not do so now. Besides, John Chatfield was becoming curious to get to the bottom of the matter.

Once more he ascended the stairs alone and entered the same room, where the two candles cast a dim, flickering light upon the living and the dead. This time Hu Siensen greeted the missionary like a long-lost brother, and seemed so relieved to see him that he was glad he had come. Once more he apologized for sending for him and once more made the same request.

John Chatfield assured him that there could be no question of it, but at his urgent request he again listened for his heartbeat, and then, as he straightened up, Hu Siensen asked him to listen lower down. Knowing the strange notions of the Chinese concerning anatomy, he did as requested and once more assured him that the figure on the cot was quite dead. Once more he thanked him and started to bow him out. This time, however, he had made up his mind to find out what was wrong.

"Why did you send for me again?" he enquired. "What makes you think that he is not dead?"

Once more, as he was about to speak, it seemed as if the mask of his control slipped, but only for a moment.

"A little while ago," he replied, simply, "he moved again and gave a groan."

"What was he sick of?" John Chatfield enquired.

In reply he gave a long account of symptoms such as are familiar to the Chinese scholar, who has also a knowledge of medicine, a strange mixture of practical

measures and superstition. The symptoms were much as John Chatfield expected to hear.

He then explained to him how the progress of the disease which induced death, continued after death, and how the general break-up of the tissues of the walls of the intestines would allow movements of gas which would produce the groaning sound which he had heard, and how a sudden such release would cause a slight movement of the corpse.

Hu Siensen was a very intelligent man within the limits of the system of thought in which he had been educated. When those limits were enlarged by an explanation such as had just been given him he took it in at once. An almost startling expression of relief transformed his face. John Chatfield realized that what he had sensed earlier was a great fear held in check by the dignity of a gentleman, and suddenly it was borne in on him why he had been sent for.

On his return he found little Yang sitting up for him with a pot of tea.

"Now," said John Chatfield, taking up his cup, "let us continue the conversation that the dog interrupted the other day. What do Chinese fear most?"

"Ah, so that was it!" said little Yang, softly. "All of that clan are very superstitious, and Hu Lay San has no modern training to counteract it, although he is a good scholar."

John Chatfield recounted the details of his final visit.

"We Chinese," continued little Yang, "are more afraid of vampires than almost anything else. We look with reverence and affection on the dead, particularly our ancestors and relatives, and the fear that their bodies will suddenly rise up in hideous form and unwithstandable strength, pounce upon the living, even their closest friends, and suck their blood, or take their lives in some horrible way, is the most terrible fear to face."

"Hu Siensen must be a brave man to have faced that for all these hours," said John Chatfield.

"Probably, after the corpse had once moved, he did not dare to leave, for fear of its attacking him while going down the stairs. That is the thing most feared in vampires. They lie in wait and have a diabolical cunning."

The two friends in silence sat for a while under the uncanny spell of the small hours after midnight. The missionary thought of the hold that fear of the powers of darkness had had on mediæval Europe, and of his own childish fear of the dark which had unaccountably returned to him since he had come to live in this strange land.

"You have delivered him from fear for this occasion," said little Yang, rising. "We must see him today and help him to get free permanently from the dominion of the powers of darkness."





## XII. RIVAL CLANS

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Thirty miles to the east of the city of Kan San, on a branch of the Da Chee, was the hamlet of Luya, where a church had been established for many years. This church was described in glowing terms to John Chatfield by his missionary colleagues in Kan San, Miss Wilson, who was in charge of the work for women, being particularly enthusiastic.

On his first visit his house-boat tied up at the chapel landing next to some cormorant fishing-boats whose owners were ending the day by feeding the smallest of their catch to their hook-beaked aquatic associates. The cormorants reached their heads far back with strange eager noises, as if they were rewinding some inner machinery, and snapped them forward to catch in midair the wiggling fish tossed to them, whose progress into the interior was scarce interrupted by quick jerks that placed them longitudinally to the birds' gullets and thus facilitated their subsequent career. The intelligent birds were then tied up for the night by the leg in rows on

bamboo poles, and promptly and efficiently went to sleep.

The chapel he found to be merely the ordinary type of Chinese residence, with several rooms thrown together for assembly purposes, the rest providing living-quarters for the pastor, with guest-room and study. As a chapel building it left much to be desired, but the congregation were proud of it, for they had themselves raised the money for land and building, and had put it up according to their own ideas. Their pride was justified, for this was the only church in Kan San to own its land and building and one of the very few in the whole province, most plants being provided by the mission.

Within a radius of a half mile of the chapel were six small hamlets containing about three hundred souls, of whom about a quarter were members of the church or children of members. As they began visitation the next day, Feng Hin Lo, the pastor, pointed out that in this regard his parish approached the proportion of Christians in the country from which the missionary came. Moreover, the church contained many members who were most earnest and sincere, who had themselves maintained regular services with a good attendance over a period of several years before the coming of Feng, who recently had been sent by John Chatfield.

As he called on the members of the church during the succeeding days, both in the six hamlets, and in the little near-by market town and across the river, he began to have visions of a large and growing work based upon the church which seemed so firmly rooted.

What he had seen thus far, however, was only the surface of things. His youthful, critical, and somewhat ambitious ideas had to a certain extent alienated his missionary colleagues, so that they had not cared to dwell on the defects of the work of his predecessors. He therefore had been told little of the serious circumstances of the last few years, when the former pastor and one of the two leading clans in the church had conspired to

defraud a member of the rival clan of a considerable piece of property. Neither had he more than barely heard it mentioned that his missionary predecessor, who had unwisely allowed himself to be drawn into active participation when the plot came to a climax, had been badly beaten up in the free fight that had then ensued. Nor had it been made clear to him that it was owing to this that the mission had not provided the church with a pastor for the past several years. Furthermore, it did not occur to Feng Hin Lo, the new pastor, to enlighten him, partly because he supposed that he already knew, and partly because he had neither the training nor the ability to evaluate a situation which was so familiar to him and put its significance before one like John Chatfield, to whose thought at that time such situations were novel and entirely alien. It was not till several years had passed that he was able to piece together out of various scraps of information and from his own experience in Luya and elsewhere the whole of the true inwardness of the events that are here recorded.

There was one unusual circumstance about the church at Luya, and that was that the greater part of its membership was divided between the clans of Moh and Ming, each of which occupied three of the six hamlets. The chief disturbing factor in the situation was their rivalry. The Mings represented the peaceful and law-abiding element in the vicinity, while the whole Moh clan stood for gang action and the regime of the bully.

Both clans had vied with each other in securing such perquisites as appertained to the work of the church, particularly those dispensed by the mission. Thus students from each had been sent through the mission schools in Kan San, to the seminary, and even to the medical school, and a number had been employed by the mission as pastors and colporteurs. This was the extent of the ambition of the clan of Ming, but the Mohs aimed not only to get what they could, but to use the church, and the mission where possible, in furthering

their own machinations. Under the old regime in China the influence of persons and organizations counted for much in relations with officials and in the courts, and this condition had continued to a certain extent, so that the actual or alleged backing of organizations like the church and mission could be of definite and practical assistance to the Mohs and their gang in their local campaigns of intimidation and extortion. This condition was enhanced in the case of the church by the fact that during the years from the collapse of the anti-foreign Boxer uprising in 1900 to the early years of the republic with which this tale deals, all foreign organizations had enjoyed great privileges and influence. Not a few persons had entered the church, much as they would join a lodge or a mutual benefit association, for what they could get out of it, particularly for help in lawsuits, quite misunderstanding its real character and objectives. Some missionaries had given such help to what appeared to them cases of persecution. It was generally coming to be recognized, however, that this was a mistaken practice, but it was not easy to root out.

Both clans presented a mixture of good and bad. Several of the Mohs had developed into earnest and effective Christian physicians and teachers, while most of the Mings got no farther than good intentions. As a whole, however, the clan of Moh failed to direct its energies into reputable lines.

Its head was Scholar Moh, who had gone to the seminary and become a preacher, and had for many years been a crony of Sun Bei En, then pastor of the city church in Kan San. At that time the two had been the leaders of the Kan San district.

Scholar Moh had less education than his name would indicate, but he had no little ability and was a swarthy, forceful individual with a dashing impudence tempered by an engaging smile. He had made the most of his seminary course, and had he been able to rise above the petty shrewdness and trickery of his environment

might have come to large usefulness. After preaching for several years, however, he had found what seemed to him a better opening, and had deserted his church at Washow, about five miles from Luya, without notice in the middle of the summer, to go to a newly established school for the training of policemen, leaving in charge of the services, and as recipient of all emoluments, his father, a man quite innocent of education, whom the missionary, on his first trip in the fall, found drunk in the courtyard of the chapel.

The police position had not worked out and Moh was back on the home farm at Luya, using all the influence that he could command to secure another position with the mission.

His method of going at it was not in strict accord with the most rigid ecclesiastical practice. He had first called on John Chatfield with an oily and fulsome account of his own attainments and successes as a pastor, and then, returning to Luya, had industriously fabricated and mailed to the missionary from various points a series of anonymous letters accusing the pastors in the Kan San district of all the sins in the decalogue. All this was in the hope of having one of them discharged and getting his place, thus following the pattern of those ancient and corrupt official practices with which he was most familiar.

John Chatfield had known little of him before he first came to ask for a position, but in spite of his able impersonation of a successful pastor, so much that was at variance with this had peered forth that, regardless of all urgings and blandishments, he had hesitated to make any promises.

It was not until much later that he came to know the man as he really was, a typical village bully with a veneer of seminary training, the local bad man of whom everyone was afraid and who, while maintaining a pious exterior for the benefit of the missionaries, which no one dared to expose, had carried into the ministry the

✓ same methods that had made him hated and feared locally.

He was in a strong position. The last pastor of the church had played into the hands of him and his gang, and he was now the most influential member of the church. In addition to this, his cousin was the teacher of the primary school for boys and girls maintained by the mission to supplement the work of the church, and was thus the only person in Luya regularly employed by church or mission.

This cousin was a large, harsh man, with a glassy eye and a grating voice, who lived just at the outskirts of the village. He had inherited a large house, one big room of which was used for the school, for which the mission paid him rent in addition to his salary. While he figured as one of the principals in the tribe of Moh, he was not a leader in his own right but by virtue of being a henchman of Scholar Moh.

On a visit to Luya some months later, John Chatfield and little Yang, together with the pastor, Feng, and several of the substantial members of the church, were going to the neighbouring church at Washow, five miles distant, for baptismal services when the subject of the school came up, not entirely by accident.

"Are you going to keep the same teacher next year?" asked Ming No Ming, pastor at Washow.

"I know of nothing to the contrary," replied he, "but I must consult with Miss Wilson, who, as you know, is in charge of the work for women in Kan San, and who pays half of the teacher's salary. Why do you ask?"

"We all feel that we ought to tell you that he is not a good teacher," said Ming No Ming. "He doesn't keep school open regularly, or teach the children carefully and correct the mistakes in their written work."

"I have twice found, on visiting the school unexpectedly," replied John Chatfield, "that several carpenters

were at work in the schoolroom, and I told him that such practices should stop."

"That is not all," said Ming No Ming in his most serious and confidential manner. "He makes the whole school turn out each year and dig his peanuts and harvest his sugar cane. Parents are highly indignant at having to pay tuition and then having their children compelled to spend so much time working in the teacher's fields."

"How can he compel them to work for him?"

"He marks them absent if they don't come to work, and then refuses to give them passing marks."

"But he has been teacher of our school for a number of years," said John Chatfield, "and Miss Wilson has always spoken in the highest terms of him and considered that he was running a good school. How have these things not become known?"

"Well, since your predecessor was beaten up, the missionaries have not come often, and usually on Saturday or Sunday when school was not in session. Then it was always known in advance when they would come, so everything could be fixed to look all right. Their visits have been primarily for the administration of the communion service and other work of the church, and the school has gotten little supervision, particularly as it seemed to be all right."

"Even if the missionaries could not easily find out, could not some of you have told them?" enquired John Chatfield, soberly.

"The one who has taken the chief interest in the school is Miss Wilson, and we all felt there was no use talking to her. When she came, which was only once or twice a year, the teacher always marched the whole school down to the landing-place to meet her boat, put on specially prepared exercises, and gave a feast in her honour. He had her completely fooled."

"Could not the church do anything?" demanded John Chatfield.

"Who would do it?" was the reply. "There was no pastor to take that responsibility, and the rest are afraid of Moh and his crowd. The church could do nothing directly, as the teacher's salary is not paid by them but by the mission, and they are doubtful whether anything would come of their taking it up."

"You see," said little Yang, courteously, "the responsibility is really in the hands of you missionaries, not on the bodies of the church members."

"I will certainly do something about it," said John Chatfield, indignantly. "I shall take it up with Miss Wilson at once on my return to Kan San."

Ming No Ming and the other members of the clan of Ming, and their friends, were encouraged by the attitude taken by the new missionary, and fully anticipated that he would be able so to present the matter as to secure the coöperation of Miss Wilson. In this hope they did considerable talking about it, which was carried to the clan of Moh and caused its members much uneasiness and apprehension.

Upon his return to Kan San John Chatfield went into the matter at once with Miss Wilson, and presented to her in detail all of the things which he had learned, together with some of his own observations, and suggested that they should send the teacher immediate notice of his discharge, as it was near the end of the year. She, however, stood up vigorously for the teacher in whom she had had so much confidence, refused to believe any of the accusations, and was unwilling to see him discharged. John Chatfield pressed the matter as tactfully and strongly as he knew how, but without results. It was impossible to act without her coöperation, as it would be most awkward for one of them to discharge the teacher while the other kept him on.

When it was learned in Luya that the tribe of Ming had been talking too much and too soon, and that Miss Wilson, patron of the tribe of Moh, had more influence than the new missionary, there was great rejoicing in



the Moh clan, and Scholar Moh and his cousin, the teacher, put their heads together and made certain plans which they figured would be of considerable financial advantage to themselves without exposing them to any penalties.

The new year was not very far advanced when John Chatfield received a long letter from the school authorities in Luya, setting forth in detail certain grievances and enquiring whether he knew of or approved certain actions on the part of the teacher, Moh. The local school at Luya was supported by a tax levied upon exports of hogs, for which Luya was a shipping point. This tax was collected at the waterside on each boat as it was ready to sail. It seemed that, beginning with the new year, the teacher, Moh, aided and abetted by his cousin, Scholar Moh and his gang, had been collecting the tax, ostensibly for the support of the mission school, stating that they did it with the approval of the missionary and in the name of the Foreign Mission Society. Other letters received from Luya at the same time gave further details and corroborated the evidence set forth in the letter from the school authorities.

This sort of thing was uncommonly brazen and, from a Western point of view, preposterous, but Moh and his friends were certain, as far as the mission was concerned, that Miss Wilson would take their word rather than that of the new missionary, and that she would have more influence. So they felt safe in that regard. Locally, Scholar Moh and his hooligans had so terrorized the district that none dared to oppose them, particularly as such opposition might bring in the missionaries on their side. This Moh and his crowd now openly claimed, and were generally believed, for the previous relation of the mission to the school seemed to give colour to their assertions.

On receipt of these letters John Chatfield came to the conclusion that something must be done immediately,

and in the face of this crisis found no difficulty in persuading Miss Wilson to give him a free hand to take whatever action investigation might prove to be necessary.

On arriving at Luya, he went at once to visit the school maintained by the village and got the details from the principal and teachers. Indeed, there was no question about it at all. The whole transaction had been barefaced. He was able to assure the school authorities and the people in the village that this had been done entirely without his knowledge and quite against the whole policy of the mission, and that action would be taken to set the matter right.

News of his coming and visit to the local school was not slow in reaching the observant Mohs, and soon a delegation waited upon him, asking him to come to a meeting that evening, as they had some matters that they wished to put before him. When he arrived at the chapel, where the meeting was held, he found a large gathering. Members of the church were there and many of the tribe of Ming. The clan of Moh seemed to be out in full force, and there were a number of others who were strangers to him. The meeting seemed to be in charge of Scholar Moh, who announced that they had come together to put before the missionary the facts of the case with regard to the tax which had been levied and concerning which the missionary had been most unfortunately misinformed.

"This is a mass meeting of the village of Luya," he went on, his bold features and engaging smile making him for the moment the public-spirited ex-minister. "My cousin and I have been collecting this tax not on our own account, as has been maliciously reported, but on behalf of the village, and are holding the money for the construction of a much-needed new boat-landing."

"We have long planned on a new landing," said a hard-looking individual with a villainous squint who now arose and whom John Chatfield recognized as an

obscure member of the tribe of Moh. "We are going to begin building it as soon as we have collected sufficient funds."

"It is the will of all of us in this village," said another, "and we have directed Scholar Moh to collect the money and carry it on for us."

These were followed by a number of others, palpably of the tribe of Moh, speaking vehemently and interrupting one another in disorderly fashion.

"It is the will of the village."

"We have appointed Scholar Moh to do it."

"We want a new landing."

"This is the truth and we are here to vouch for it."

John Chatfield was new to China, but not so new as to be taken in by a meeting of this sort which had evidently been set up for his especial benefit. In the first place, villages did not hold their meetings in chapels. Then there had been no previous mention of a boat-landing in any letters, or in conversations with any of the numerous people he had talked with since arriving in Luya. So this was evidently an explanation thought up on the spur of the moment. Furthermore, the speakers were not particularly courteous and there was a background of threat and violence which was reflected in the timid attitudes of many of the church members. He had not been prepared for so big a meeting, nor for one so obviously designed to put pressure on him, so he remained watchful and silent until, after all had spoken who cared to, Scholar Moh, as chairman, turned to him and in his best manner asked him to say a few words in reply. Good form in China demands at least a show of courtesy on all occasions, and this fitted in with John Chatfield's own preference, so he set aside his feelings of dislike and indignation and rose and faced them quietly.

"I wish to make it clear," he began, pleasantly, "that I have nothing whatever to do with the affairs of the village of Luya, or any other. Neither the church nor

the mission has any right or desire to interfere with any governmental or legal matter. Indeed, it is their definite policy not to do so. Our only interest is in the spiritual affairs of the church and the good life of its members. This has often been misunderstood. Indeed, it seems to me that it is being misunderstood tonight. I must, therefore, reply that I am not in a position to discuss any matter whatsoever with a meeting of the village such as this. I would, however, like to talk over with the members of the church present, after the others have withdrawn, any relation of the church to this whole affair."

This unlooked-for line of action completely took the wind out of the sails of Moh and his crowd, who rather crestfallenly withdrew after a formal speech by Scholar Moh summing up the situation. Whereupon the missionary went over the facts in detail, as he had gotten them, explained his disbelief as to what he had heard in the meeting, stated that he expected to take vigorous action next day, and asked their advice.

"What action do you expect to take?" asked Ming No Ming.

"I have already notified the teacher of his dismissal, to take effect at the end of the month," replied John Chatfield.

"But he will tell everybody that he has not been dismissed," replied the senior deacon, a tinsmith from the near-by market town of Yubu.

"But his salary will stop," said the missionary.

"He will go on with the school just the same," said Ming No Ming, "and pocket the tuition."

"And then he will continue to collect the tax and say that the mission is back of him," said the tinsmith.

"But surely I cleared up that matter tonight," said John Chatfield.

"But you are only a new missionary," said the tinsmith, with candour, "and they will say that you cannot speak for the mission, and that Miss Wilson and the rest will not agree with you."

John Chatfield had no reply to this as he thought sadly of the many times his policies had come under fire among his missionary colleagues, and how the state of things in Luya up to the present would confirm the village in believing Moh and his active crowd of rumour-mongers, as against himself. The problem was to set the church and the mission right before the village and the authorities. It was clear that only something drastic would make the point clear to all.

"What are you going to do with the equipment?" enquired the tinsmith, "the desks and the benches?"

"I thought that we would leave it here till we got another teacher for the school," replied John Chatfield.

"Where?" enquired the tinsmith.

"I hadn't thought."

"If you leave it with Moh, the teacher, he will surely go on with the school, salary or no salary. If you leave it anywhere else here, he and his gang will soon get it," said the tinsmith, conclusively.

"Absolutely correct," said Feng, the pastor, who had kept silent up to this point, but who foresaw trouble if the equipment should be stored in the chapel. "The only safe way is to take it back to Kan San. We cannot go on with the school for a while now, anyway."

"Just so," said Ming No Ming. "That will make the disapproval of the church and mission unmistakably clear to all."

To this all agreed; but another difficulty now arose.

"How will you get the furniture away?" asked the tinsmith. "Moh will never submit tamely to parting with it, and particularly to the loss of face involved."

"I will get an extra boat and load it on," said John Chatfield.

"No boatmen here would dare to undertake it," said Ming No Ming, emphatically. "They would be afraid to go into Moh's house and carry out the stuff."

This caused a pause.

"Then we shall have to send a messenger to engage a boat from a distance," said John Chatfield.

"You'd better make sure that it has several able-bodied boatmen," said the tinsmith; "tell them that there may be trouble and offer them extra pay to see it through."

Early the next day John Chatfield sent notice to the teacher of the removal of the school furniture, not stating, however, the time, and immediately upon the arrival of his boatmen he took them and went to the school. He had hoped to have the pastor or some of the others accompany him, but no one was willing to do so, and he had to go ahead as best he could alone. He found himself wishing for little Yang.

Although he had given notice to the teacher of his dismissal and the removal of the equipment, this had not been taken seriously, and when he arrived with his men he found the school in session. The teacher was hearing a pupil "back the book" and completely ignored his presence. After waiting a few moments, he remarked quietly that he had come to remove the equipment which belonged to the mission. The teacher replied loudly and arrogantly that it could not be done. This constituted a deadlock. The missionary, however, knew that hesitation would be fatal, so he went promptly to the nearest desk, told the pupil seated at it to take out his books and other belongings and go home. Then he turned to his boatmen and directed them to carry the desk out. The teacher stepped angrily forward and ordered them away, so that they paused irresolutely, not knowing which party would gain the point and wishing to avoid trouble. The missionary at once stepped up, took one end of the desk himself, motioned a boatman to take the other, and with the teacher clinging to the desk and expostulating at every step, they carried it out of the building. The same process was repeated with the next desk and the next, but the teacher eventually desisted and soon things were going more easily and

the boatmen were hard at work and the missionary was sending home the last of the pupils.

By this time other members of the tribe of Moh, who had been sent for posthaste at the beginning of hostilities, began to pour into the place like a swarm of hornets. The removal of the desks was a job of several hours for the three boatmen, and during this time it was necessary to preserve such semblance of courtesy as might be possible, and, at all events, to avoid violence. As each additional member of the clan came in John Chatfield greeted him quietly and courteously. Each started in with a loud voice and threatening manner, but when he found that all his attempts at intimidation met with no effect, gradually quieted down in a fashion that, under any less difficult and embarrassing circumstances, would have been highly amusing.

Finally Scholar Moh and a couple of his aides seized pen and paper and, putting their heads together with much emphatic discussion and many vigorous asides for the benefit of the missionary, began to draw up a formidable document. On completing it, Moh took his stand in front of John Chatfield, struck an attitude, and began to read in a tremendous voice. The missionary held up his hand, with an unwilling grin.

"My hearing is perfectly good," he said, dryly.

Moh stared at him angrily and made no reply.

"I cannot follow your fine literary style," he continued, "so it is no use going on with the reading. Won't you please sit down and just tell me what it is all about?"

Moh, after a moment's hesitation, sat down.

"This is an accusation against you," he said in his most threatening manner. "We are sending it at once to the *yamen* of the district magistrate."

"Accusing me of what?" asked John Chatfield.

Moh's manner became, if possible, more threatening and ominous, and taking up his legal document, and

again rising, he laid down his charges, emphasizing them with fulminating legal phraseology, point by point.

"Item, the said foreign shepherd, John Chatfield, has in a high-handed and arbitrary manner interfered with the affairs of the village of Luya. Item, he has without reason or due notice closed the Profusely Fruitful Christian Primary School, an important educational institution whose efficient staff was doing excellent work. Item, he has publicly insulted and maligned the principal of the said school. Item, he has forcefully and unlawfully seized the furniture of the said school. Item . . ."

"That is enough," said John Chatfield, interrupting. "You know perfectly well that I am fully in the right in every move I am making."

"You will think it is enough before we get through," said Moh, angrily.

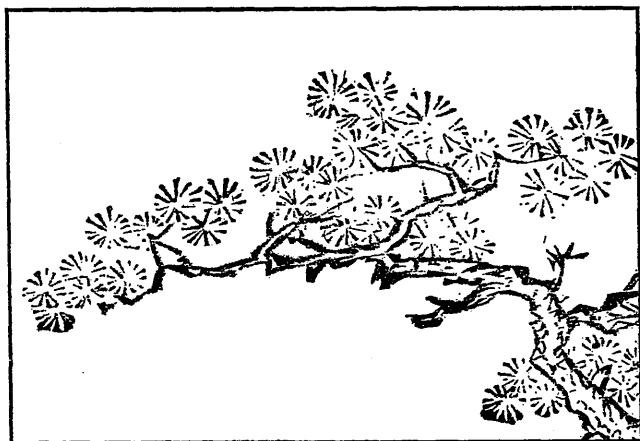
"Go ahead and make your accusations, then," said John Chatfield, watching his boatmen carrying out the last desk. "None of that rubbish will stand in any court."

Moh and his gang looked at one another uncertainly, and realizing that they had shot their last bolt, turned without a word and stalked solemnly away, while the missionary with a sigh of relief followed them out.

The missionaries regretted the loss of the school and were chagrined at having it come to such an end. They comforted themselves, however, with the thought that at least they had set the church and the work of the mission right before the community. This was indeed the case and bore fruit in time.

But all who lived in Luya were chiefly interested in it as another development in the strife of the two rival clans, who had for so long made the affairs of the church their battlefield—a great blow to the prestige of the clan of Moh and a cause of rejoicing to the clan of Ming.





### XIII. THE CLAN THAT WOULD RULE

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John Chatfield had heard that there had been serious trouble over a piece of property between the clans of Moh and Ming, and that the missionary who was his predecessor, who had unwisely allowed himself to become involved, had been severely beaten, but when several of the deacons came to him about the disposition of some money that had been bequeathed to the church, it never occurred to him that he might be headed for a similar situation.

The Mings as a tribe were colourless and ineffectual, but kindly and honest, and had the interests of the church at heart. The Mohs were in the church to rule it for what they could get out of it, and it was their leader, Scholar Moh, over whom the deacons were chiefly worried.

"Paying the money into the hands of Yu Lao Ban, the treasurer, is just the same as putting it into the hands of Scholar Moh," said the tinsmith of Yubu, senior deacon.

"But he does not belong to the clan of Moh," said John Chatfield.

"He will play into their hands. Scholar Moh will get it out of him," said Ming No Ming. "Why, the whole clan will be disturbed in their sleep until they get their hands on that money."

"But surely you can trust Yu Lao Ban," said John Chatfield. "He is the oldest member of the church. You have elected him treasurer. He conducted the services most faithfully during the three years the church was without a pastor."

"We know his devotion to the church," said the tinsmith, "but we know, too, that he is a bit tricky in financial matters. Then Scholar Moh already has made his plans to get that money. The only sure way is to have it paid publicly to you, and you announce that it will be deposited with the mission treasurer in Shangchow as the nucleus of a building fund."

John Chatfield was in considerable doubt as to the wisdom of this, particularly as the meeting was an informal one, none of the clan of Moh being present. All of the other members were unanimous, however, and so much in earnest that he accepted their judgment. Unfortunately, he had not yet learned the unwisdom of the missionary taking things into his own hands, instead of having them done by the church in regular order.

A new pastor had recently been appointed to Luya, and a series of special meetings was in progress at which a Chinese evangelist was speaking most effectively. It was arranged that the money in question was to be paid over at the close of the last meeting.

Accordingly, John Chatfield arose and explained that the money which had been loaned on the mortgage was now to be returned, and announced the disposition to be made of it. The owner of the land thereupon came forward and laid out thirty silver dollars upon the communion table in the sight of all. and John Chatfield

handed him the mortgage, which he examined and accepted.

Then, before he could take his seat or the missionary could collect the money, Yu Lao Ban, treasurer of the church, shuffled forward, a tall, crafty old figure in bulging garments of quilted cotton, with cunning lines about his determined eyes. He had the air of being totally oblivious of John Chatfield's presence.

"I am the treasurer of the church," he stated, with dignity. "The money comes to me."

"But, I have already announced the wish of the members that this money be deposited with the mission treasurer as a special fund," replied the missionary.

"That makes no difference. I am the treasurer," said the old man, stubbornly, and started to take the money.

"But you must respect the wishes of the members," John Chatfield replied, placing his hands over the money.

"I am the treasurer," he repeated, and started to push the missionary's hands aside.

John Chatfield could not dispute this, and began to regret that no official action had been taken by the committee. Moreover, he realized that to lay hands on the old man to force him to his seat would not only be undignified and discourteous, but would inevitably start a commotion. The thing that was uppermost in his mind, however, during the brief moment while he was resisting the old treasurer's effort to push his hands aside, was above all else to avoid a scene which would nullify all the good effect of the meetings which had just closed.

The audience, which had followed these developments with breathless interest, now saw the chagrined missionary give way and the old treasurer pocket the money and walk triumphantly to his seat amid the visible congratulations of all of the tribe of Moh.

After the meeting adjourned the majority stayed on, each group seeking to justify its position. The Mings

were outspoken that the money should be transferred to Shangchow, the Mohs that it should be held in Luya and used as needed for repairs. The discussion became acrimonious, but the money remained in the hands of the obdurate old treasurer, and finally all went home except a few of the leading members.

These were too put out to be polite, and said openly that if some more experienced missionary had been there some way would have been found to keep the money. John Chatfield could only reply that they had made a mistake in not having it out in a regular deacons' meeting with the Mohs present and taking formal action, and that no matter what the others did they must keep in the right.

To this they found no answer, but John Chatfield realized bitterly that he and the work he represented had lost face before the whole community, and that the Mohs had not only gotten the money, but, what was more serious, had disheartened the better elements in the church, and so discredited him with them that they had little hope of anything that he could do to remedy the situation.

In no country is more importance attached to propriety and what is right and fitting than in China, but the intensely practical character of the people leads to the paradox that the man most generally admired by the populace is the one who can get away with it. Hence in the eyes of all, the tactics of Scholar Moh and the old treasurer were quite legitimate and should have been met by similar methods.

The matter was indignantly discussed at the next monthly meeting of the ministers in the Kan San district. All agreed that in passing into the hands of the old treasurer the money was as good as turned over to Scholar Moh, and while all felt the loss of the money, they were much more concerned over the new defeat

which the church had suffered at the hands of those of the clan of Moh who had for so long made trouble.

At length they turned to John Chatfield. As the only foreigner in a group of Chinese he had kept silent, for he felt the loss of face most keenly, but he had his answer ready.

"We cannot accept such a defeat at the hands of that crowd," said he, "and I am personally unwilling to rest until it is cleared up. If the money is not recovered before the meeting of the provincial association here next year, I shall appeal to them."

There were exclamations of dismay.

"We can't have a humiliating thing like this aired before the churches of the whole province," said An Yu Lo, the senior of the group of ministers.

"That is the way I feel," said John Chatfield. "We should do our own dirty work. I am ready to go just as far as we can agree on unanimously."

"Let us all go together to Luya and demand the money," proposed little Yang. "We can call a special meeting of the church after we get there, and publicly demand its restoration. With us all there they won't dare to refuse."

This suggestion cheered the meeting considerably and was adopted.

"But I know old Yu Lao Ban," said the cautious senior minister. "Suppose he refuses to give up the money?"

Again little Yang had a plan that carried conviction.

"Let the church vacate the office of treasurer, elect a new one, and instruct old Yu Lao Ban to turn the money over to him."

Once more An Yu Lo, conservative and hesitant senior minister, had his doubts.

"Suppose he won't?"

This was a poser.

After a considerable pause, little Yang looked at John Chatfield, who saw for a moment his familiar, half-

impudent schoolboy grin flash across his face, and smiled back. But what he said sobered him.

"Then the foreign pastor-in-charge must go to the *yamen* and enter a complaint before the district magistrate that Yu Lao Ban is unlawfully holding funds that should be turned over to the new treasurer."

John Chatfield was exceedingly reluctant to appeal to a magistrate, even on behalf of the church, but the minister's meeting was unanimous that it must be done if necessary.

Accordingly, the eight ministers and the missionary arrived at Luya ten days later, no notice having been sent of their coming.

The minister of the Luya church, Feng Hin Lo, met them at the boat-landing. Feng had a quizzical face, flanked by long ears that came to a point at the top, and a humorous mouth. He had been in Luya only a short time, but already long enough to earn the enmity of the clan of Moh, who were not prepared to tolerate any minister who did not play the game according to their rules. On the other hand, he had made friends of all the rest of the members of the church, for, while he had little ability as a preacher or leader, he had a certain vitality and light-heartedness and had a wholly sincere and earnest Christian faith that impressed all who came to know him.

After a brief conference with Feng, the ministers separated to consult with the leading members in their homes.

John Chatfield had been in his house-boat only a short time when he saw An Yu Lo approaching at what was for him a terrific pace.

"I wish we never had come," he burst out when he was seated.

"What has Scholar Moh been up to now?" enquired John Chatfield.

"It isn't what you think," he said, bitterly. "Here all of us have come, only to lose more face."

"Not Mrs. Feng again," said John Chatfield, apprehensively.

He nodded.

"Feng has just told me that she is under suspicion again, and he has almost decided to send her back to her parents for good this time. It is causing a lot of gossip."

The missionary thought sadly of the ruin of Feng's home and of his career as a minister, for he had had to leave his previous church because of the indiscretions of his wife. Nothing could be proved, and he had at last received her back from her parents' home, and it had been arranged for him to go to Luya in the hope that the woman had learned her lesson.

The senior minister suddenly jarred him into a realization of the situation that confronted them.

"Here all of us ministers come to clean up the church, and find one of ourselves in bad odour. If we try to do anything to the old treasurer, they will retaliate with this. Then what can we do? The best thing is to go back at once."

"We must see it through," said John Chatfield.

"We will have no face to see it through," he returned, decisively.

John Chatfield came back to his formula.

"No matter what they do, we must keep ourselves in the right. We shall first have to discipline Feng's wife, and then deal with the treasurer."

And so, after conference with Feng and the other ministers, it was agreed. This raised considerable question as to Feng's continuing as pastor of the church, but this was left for later decision.

That evening the deacons met in the house-boat to plan for the special meeting of the church called for the next day. An Yu Lo, senior minister, put the situation before them.

"You are the official members of the church. We are here to help, but when it comes to taking action you must do it."

"The best thing will be for the foreign pastor-in-charge to handle it," said a deacon, while the others all assented.

"No," said John Chatfield, for he had learned his lesson. "It is your problem, not ours."

"Why can't you deal with it?" enquired the senior minister of the deacons, but got no answer until after both little Yang and John Chatfield had repeated the question.

"We are afraid of Scholar Moh and his gang," one of them at length reluctantly replied, and this was echoed by all.

"What is there to be afraid of?" John Chatfield enquired, at a loss, for he knew some of these men to be leaders in the village, several of them being particularly bold and enterprising.

Then followed a most amazing recital. One told how Moh, with several of his gang to prevent interference, had come and picked his fruit. Another told how Moh had picked his mulberry leaves. Still another told how the gang had come and carried off part of his fodder. Another explained how Moh had applied early to the district magistrate and gotten the concession of a large piece of land across the river which was granted for operating a ferry. This concession had been held for years by another man, and Moh, by going before the time and through the influence of a friend in the *yamen*, had gotten the concession by trickery. He had cultivated the land and reaped the crops, but had not maintained the ferry, and the village had suffered in consequence but had not dared to do anything about it because of the threats of Moh and his gang. Others then told of how, even when he had been pastor of one of the churches, he had engaged in idol worship at the time



of the sickness of his son, or at least had permitted it to be carried on in his house.

"If he is this kind of man," said John Chatfield, indignantly, "he ought to be put out of the church."

"That is what we all think," said they.

So it was decided, and the deacons, although with manifest perturbation, agreed to take the initiative in moving and seconding the motion for his expulsion.

Meantime two of the preachers went to see the treasurer, Yu Lao Ban, and served notice upon him that unless the thirty dollars were returned by noon the next day, the missionary would go to the *yamen* and push the matter to the full extent of the law. They got no satisfaction from the shrewd old man and had to content themselves with giving notice.

After the meeting with the deacons, the ministers adjourned to the chapel, where they drank tea and talked over the situation. As they were doing so, Scholar Moh swaggered in for a bit of reunion with his old friends and fellow workers. He received a frigid reception. He ventured some remarks as to the money and was tersely told the situation. He expressed his scepticism as to the possibility of accomplishing anything, but was told that the group had no intention of stopping short of a complete straightening of the whole matter. So evident was the disapproval of all, that it was too much for even his effrontery and he shortly went his way.

An hour before the church meeting the next morning the senior minister appeared at the house-boat in the greatest distress.

"Tu Siensen," he stated, dogmatically, "we must leave at once."

"What more has happened?" asked John Chatfield.

"One of the Mohs, who is an old schoolmate of mine, told me that Feng left his Sunday services some time ago to go to court on behalf of one of his friends."

"Why didn't Feng tell us this, too, when he told about his wife?"

"He knows how you feel about going to the *yamen*, and didn't dare to."

"Then why didn't the deacons tell us?"

"Because they didn't want to offend Feng and because the man he helped was a friend of theirs."

"You say one of the Mohs told you this?"

"Yes. And they have this counterblast ready to spring as soon as we do anything."

Feng was at once summoned and admitted that the accusation was true, stating, however, that he had been called as a witness and had no choice in the matter. This was doubtless the case, but no one could expect it to be believed under the circumstances in the face of the charges that the Moh crowd would be sure to bring.

A meeting of the ministers was hurriedly called, and once more John Chatfield applied his formula that whatever the others did, they must keep in the right. Then he proposed a program: first, that the wife of the preacher should be suspended from church membership pending further investigation; second, that Feng should resign his pastorate; third, that they take up the case of Scholar Moh and certain others and expel them from the church.

So it was agreed, and the saddened group of ministers made their way to the meeting.

They were considerably cheered up, however, by one circumstance. The daughter of Yu Lao Ban had come to one of their number early in the morning and asked him whether he thought the foreign pastor would really send her old father to jail. The preacher, putting it far more strongly than John Chatfield would have done, replied that he would if the money was not returned. The woman said that she would go and persuade him to pay it over, and shortly before the meeting returned with the money.

They had accomplished the thing that they had come to do, but this had now become a minor matter.

The church was packed. The unexpected coming of

all the ministers in the Kan San district, and the rumours that had gotten about, brought out not only all the members of the church, but a number of non-members, particularly the whole tribe of Moh and all their adherents, very evidently prepared to make trouble.

John Chatfield made a brief statement of the reason of the meeting and the matter of the pastor's wife, and she was duly suspended from church membership. Then Feng arose and, stating frankly his own shortcomings, announced his resignation as pastor of the church, and speaking as pastor-in-charge and on behalf of the deacons, John Chatfield accepted it.

By this time the Moh contingent woke up to the fact that their thunder was being stolen. The wife of Scholar Moh, an uncommonly refined woman for that region, arose and in a delicate, ladylike manner made a succession of the most foul accusations against Feng, nothing in the decalogue being omitted except murder. When she had finished, one or two others spoke briefly along similar lines, but John Chatfield cut off further discussion by saying that Feng had resigned, that his resignation was accepted, and his services as pastor of that church would be terminated at the end of the month.

John Chatfield then announced the third item, the disciplining of Scholar Moh. This was a bolt from the blue for the whole clan. After he had made a brief statement, An Yu Lo, senior minister, was called on to make the charges. Never had the arrogance of his conservative scholarship been put to better use than in flaying the double dealing of the renegade minister.

"Scholar Moh, you have heard the charges. What have you to say in reply?" asked John Chatfield when An Yu Lo had finished, and braced himself for eventualities.

Scholar Moh arose, but shorn of his usual audacious attitude and confident smile. He knew that the charges were true and that every one else there knew it. He managed only a few halting words of explanation and sat down.

"Is that all you can say for yourself?" asked John Chatfield, in surprise.

Scholar Moh remained silent.

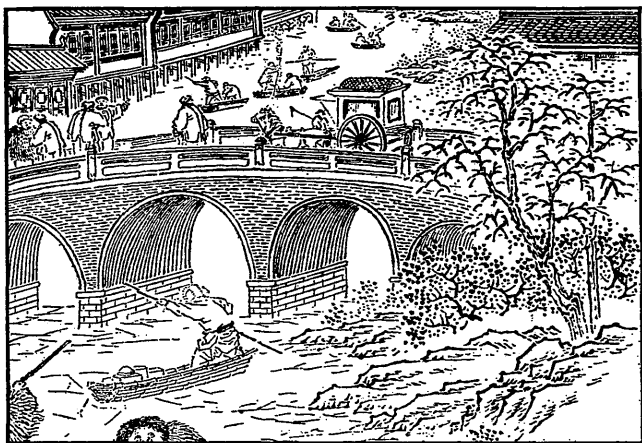
Several of his supporters tried to come to his assistance, but did not even attempt to refute the charges against him, but spent their time in counter-attacks.

The deacons now announced their recommendation and called for a vote. The question was put and the better elements of the church screwed up their courage and raised their hands, regardless of the presence of the Moh contingent. The result of the vote was announced and Scholar Moh declared expelled from the church.

Then pandemonium broke loose. The whole tribe of Moh came to their feet as one man and poured out a tirade against the missionary, the preacher, and the members of the church. After exhausting an extensive vocabulary they gradually withdrew, and at last peace and silence reigned, save for the sobbing of the old treasurer on a back bench.

Thereupon the members of the church remaining proceeded to exclude certain others, elect a new treasurer, and reorganize.

Thus came to an end the domination of the clan of Moh, and the beginning of better things for the church at Luya.



#### XIV. MONEY TALKS

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Land purchase is not a simple matter in China. John Chatfield had been trying for two years to secure a new location for the academy in Kan San, and had become fully convinced of the fact.

First he had secured a reliable middleman, for it is not good business to try to handle such matters direct. Then the middleman had looked up suitable plots of ground. These had had to be inspected almost surreptitiously and carefully checked as to size, drainage, and title. In order to have a campus of even modest size it was necessary that a number of separate pieces be bought. Each piece was owned by a family, and the consent of each adult in each family had to be obtained.

After a satisfactory site had been found a course of bargaining had begun which extended over several months, the asking price high, the offer low. At length an agreement had been reached, and a day set to sign the deeds. On the night before, the grandmother in one

family had decided that she did not care to sell, and it was all off.

The old lady had died six months later, and, after a decent interval of several months, negotiations had been reopened. Again, when all was arranged, the second wife of the third brother in another family had decided to hold out for a larger personal share, and negotiations had been again automatically suspended until she had changed her mind, which was not for another year. And so it had gone.

One day, on his return to Kan San from a prolonged trip in the country, John Chatfield found the middleman waiting for him.

"They have decided to accept our offer," he said.

"Good," said John Chatfield. "Will it really come off this time?"

"All the members of all five families are prepared to sign today. They may change their minds before tomorrow, so we must put the deal through at once."

"Excellent," said John Chatfield. "Get them together and we will do so."

"They make one condition," said the middleman, "the whole amount must be paid in cash."

"I can give them a cheque on Shangchow," said John Chatfield. "We have nothing like that amount of cash here."

"Then the deal is off," said the middleman, positively. "They are uneducated people, and suspicious of anything but silver, and doubtful of everything foreign. They will want to ring every last dollar to test whether it is counterfeit or under weight."

This was a poser. It ordinarily took eight days to get money from Shangchow. Even by telegraphing, it would take four days at best to send it up by express, as money could not be transferred to local native banks by telegraph, and there were, of course, no foreign banks in Kan San. The amount required, two thousand dollars,

seemed formidable in a region where carpenters got ten cents a day, whole families lived on sixty dollars a year, and large amounts in cash were seldom necessary. John Chatfield was determined to avoid another long delay and the chance of not securing a site for the school at all, so he resolved to make every effort.

An hour or two of enquiry exhausted the possibilities. None of the other missionaries had anything at all approaching the amount needed. The two foreign oil companies which could handle cheques and from which he frequently got money had none on hand at that time of the month. It looked as if he were in for another delay.

Then he remembered that once, a year or two ago, money had come from Shangchow in the form of a Chinese draft which the leading native bank in Kan San had cashed. It was possible that they would remember him. Would they cash a cheque in English on a foreign bank in Shangchow? It had never been done. Furthermore, it was unlikely that any one in the bank would know English. To ask for such an accommodation seemed hopeless, almost an impertinence. But John Chatfield was a man of action. He preferred attempting the impossible to acknowledging himself beaten.

The bank was like any other shop, except for an absence of wares. He presented his card, and from an anteroom was conducted into a small courtyard. Here a fat man was sitting, stripped to the waist, for it was a hot day in late spring. John Chatfield was shown to a seat opposite him, and tea was placed before them.

"You may possibly remember that you cashed a draft from Shangchow for five hundred dollars for me, two years ago," he began, after the polite preliminaries were over.

"Yes, I think I do," said the banker, courteously.

"I am in a difficulty, and have come to ask if you could help me," he continued.

The banker responded with the usual noncommittal

polite phrase, and with considerable embarrassment John Chatfield made his request, enquiring whether there was any possibility of the bank being able to handle his cheque in English on a foreign bank.

The banker looked at him keenly, and enquired why he had to have the money that day. John Chatfield told him the whole story, of the need for land for the development of the academy, of the long negotiations, and of the condition that the payment must be in cash.

"I know about your school," said the banker, who had listened with interest, nodding at intervals.

"Do you live in the foreign house on South Market Street?" he asked when John Chatfield finished.

"Yes, the one just back of the Christian church. Have you been there?"

"I have attended services at the church a number of times," said the banker, "and I know that there have been American missionaries living in that house now for forty years."

There was a pause while the teacups were refilled.

"Have you a cheque-book?" asked the banker.

John Chatfield produced it. The banker pointed to the name of the bank in Chinese on the margin.

"I know the bank of Diffuse Abundance. The bank is all right. But have you two thousand dollars in it?"

"No," said John Chatfield, frankly. "I would have to telegraph our treasurer in Shangchow to deposit it to my credit."

The banker nodded.

"Write out your cheque and let me see it," he directed.

John Chatfield carefully filled out cheque and stub in English, and passed it over. The banker scrutinized it carefully, holding it first one way and then the other, and smiled apologetically.

"I do not understand a single word of English," he said.

Then after a moment's thought he looked John Chatfield straight in the eye.



"Is this your cheque for two thousand dollars?" he demanded.

"It is," replied John Chatfield, returning look for look.

"All right," said the banker. "How do you want the money?"



## XV. NEW WORK, NEW WORRIES

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The new place was Nan Yang, five miles from Lotien, a village in a mountain valley just at the point where it debouched upon the plain. Great trees on which the leaves were just coming out in the spring cast swaying shadows across the neatly whitewashed walls of the houses. Up and down the valley was a succession of villages, Nan Yang being the chief one.

Following the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the church at Lotien and the evangelistic campaign through the surrounding villages, little Yang, set out to look up all who had ever been members of the church, and if possible to bring them back to the fold. In the course of his visitations he had come to Nan Yang, where he found two brothers, Wu Si Fan and Wu Si Kan by name, who had not attended church for many years, but said that they willingly would do so save for the inconvenience of the long distance. They said they would be very glad to do anything in their power to help if a chapel could be established at Nan

Yang. When little Yang discovered a friend of theirs who had many years before purchased a Bible from a colporteur and desired to know more of Christianity, he began to think that this might be a promising opening and took the matter up with John Chatfield, who readily agreed.

At the outskirts of Nan Yang was an ancient country villa. Part of this little Yang rented. The villa was in the form of a rectangle. Each end was an airy room constructed on an arching stone bridge over a little mountain stream which flowed swiftly and musically by. The rooms on the side to the south opened onto a narrow porch overhanging the stream. Those to the north had great doors opening on wide steps leading down to the clear, shallow brook with its darting fishes and sandy bottom. At the back other great doors opened upon a sunny garden with a curiously carved stone memorial arch, where crimson magnolias were opening their first blossoms. The fragrance of the garden, the warm winds of spring, the coolness of the mountain stream, and the views from the rooms over the stream looking upon mountain peaks and valley gave the place wonderful charm, and the shady porch for the heat of summer and the sunlit steps for the cold of winter, together with the simplicity of the arrangement, and the restrained taste of the architect in adding lattices and ornamental windows, summed up the best of the ancient Chinese ideals of simple living in contact with nature.

Three rooms of the villa adjoining the street were used, two of them for a chapel and the third for the accommodation of the preacher on his visits. The rental came to six dollars a year, which Wu Si Fan and the other members of the church in Nan Yang had offered to pay as their contribution. In addition, the members of the church at Lotien had agreed to bear all other expenses, so that the new work was to be opened by the church at Lotien as its special responsibility without making any call upon the foreign society.

The opening of the new preaching-place was a great event. Little Yang, who had a knack for making friends, borrowed all of the benches belonging to the local school. The members from Lotien carried over an old pulpit and various other furnishings. They themselves came in force, bringing along all of the necessities for a two days' stay. To add to the impressiveness of the occasion, Little Yang had arranged with a near-by magistrate to provide police to handle the crowd. This seemed unnecessary to John Chatfield, whose policy it was to leave officials strictly alone, but before the day was over he recognized little Yang's wisdom, for the crowd far exceeded his expectations.

As the responsibility for the work was being taken by the members of the church, they were given a large part in the exercises. So after a brief statement of the object of the mission by John Chatfield, and of the aims and purposes of the church by little Yang, various members were called upon one by one to give their testimony. This they did, simply and unostentatiously, but with great effect, for the people were far more impressed by the words of others like themselves than by the careful arguments of the missionary, or the address by the pastor whom they knew to be paid for doing such work. To the missionary especially it meant much to see the members of the church taking their part in the work. He checked them off as they spoke. There was Wei Chang, who, when the powerful clan of Hu, to which he belonged, had tried to seize the property of the church at Lotien, had, alone of all of his clan, sided with the church and stood out against them all. There was the tailor from Wong Chia whom he had first seen tied to a pillar in his village temple because he had become a Christian. There was Dang Yin Fang from Dang San, one of the deacons of the church, who had on occasion been willing to publicly admit himself in the wrong and make restitution. There was Wang Lan

Din of Stone Pine who had single-handed carried on a night school for eight months in his own house.

After these four and others had spoken, little Yang explained the proposal to establish a class to make a study of Christianity, stating that he would come every Friday night and teach such as would join. He then asked how many would like to enroll their names as enquirers. Those who had been promoting the opening of the new chapel had been talking up the matter with a number of their friends, with the result that nineteen then and there enrolled themselves as members of the class and agreed to come every Friday night.

Thus was the new work started. John Chatfield knew that in work of this sort, well begun was not anything like half done, so he took care to warn little Yang and the others to be particularly circumspect and see that no entanglement of any sort should arise to mar its development.

Everything went beautifully at first. Such progress was made that two Bible women were detailed to spend some time in visitation. They made great headway with the women in Nan Yang and the near-by villages, often spending a week or two at the place, at which time they lived in the third room adjoining the chapel, and little Yang slept on Friday nights at the home of Wu Si Fan.

The number in attendance at the Friday-night enquirers' class slowly increased and was sure to be much larger when the two Bible women were there, being regularly augmented at that time by an additional number of women from the village, particularly the "little wife" of the leading man of Nan Yang, who became on very friendly terms with the younger one of the Bible women.

One Friday afternoon, on arriving at the home of Wu Si Fan for supper before going to the enquirers' class, little Yang found him in a state of excitement.

"Have you heard the news?" he exclaimed as soon as little Yang appeared at the door.

"What news?" he asked, with a smile, as he took a seat and poured himself a cup of tea, which Wu Si Fan was obviously too excited to think of.

"We are in for trouble," said Wu Si Fan, "a whole lot of trouble."

"That is nothing new," said little Yang, with a grin. "Tell me about it."

"It has been the talk of the place for the last week that the little wife of the leading man of this place ran away at midnight last Friday, and came to the chapel and was taken in by you, and in consequence the leading man is threatening to close the chapel and ruin you," said Wu Si Fan, all in a breath.

Little Yang was instantly serious.

"But did not you tell them that I always sleep here with you when the Bible women come, so as to avoid any possibility of talk?"

"I have been telling every one that all week, but no one will believe me."

"Why shouldn't they believe you?"

"The leading man is angry over the loss of his favourite wife and accuses you and the church of encouraging her to leave and helping her to escape, and has sworn to get even, so he and all his friends and hangers-on keep repeating the story, whether they believe it or not. He has great influence here. No one would care to contradict him."

"But did not the Bible women explain?"

"They left early Saturday morning for Kan San, and evidently had no idea of this sort of trouble."

"What did the little wife do? Did she return to her husband?" asked little Yang, anxiously.

"No, she went back to her own family very early the next morning."

"And so the leading man wants to take it out on

us by way of saving his face and venting his wrath," said little Yang, sagely.

"That is it," said Wu Si Fan. "Everyone knows it, but no one dares to say it."

"Why did the woman leave?"

"She had a violent quarrel with the first wife. The first wife is much older, and very jealous of the little wife, who is the favourite. The little wife comes of a poor family with no influence to back her up, and the first wife has persecuted her and quarrelled with her repeatedly. The rumour is that she has boasted that she will make her commit suicide. The first wife comes from a very influential family."

"Then she, too, would be against us for befriending the little wife."

"Yes, she and the leading man have common cause in this. I saw something of the sort coming and warned the Bible women about being too friendly with her and encouraging her too much."

"That is safest," said little Yang, "but we need to remember that many of these poor women have nowhere to turn except to the church, and we have to take a chance of a bit of trouble in order to help them out."

"Some of these young Bible women have pretty advanced ideas," said Wu Si Fan. "They should be more careful."

"Perhaps," said little Yang, "but do not we Christians hold that men and women have equal rights? We can not blame women for wanting things better. Now let us eat and then see what we can do to clear matters up."

As little Yang and Wu Si Fan later made their way into the village and along its narrow streets to the chapel, they were aware of a restraint in the greetings of those they met, and it was clear that a serious change had taken place in the attitude of the village toward them and the work for which they stood. The reports that had been so persistently and maliciously spread were having their effect.

The enquirers' class that evening was noticeably smaller than usual, and was considerably perturbed over the situation. It soon became very clear to little Yang that all of their promising work would come to an ignominious close unless some way could be found effectively to settle the matter, so early the next morning he set out for Kan San to take counsel with John Chatfield.

"And I have been thinking it over on the way in," he concluded, "and the only way to really settle the matter would be to get the leading man to change his attitude and retract the charges he has made."

"Why not just go on with our work and wait for it to blow over?"

"It would seriously cripple the work," replied little Yang. "The number in the enquirers' class is already beginning to decrease, and will drop sharply next week if we do not do something. People do not want to offend a man of so much influence. Then if we do not clear it up people will begin to believe that his charges are true, and it will damage our work for years to come."

"The only sure way, I suppose," said John Chatfield, "would be to get the woman to go back, which would hardly be right."

"Impossible," said little Yang; "the church never could be a party to that."

"It would be sacrificing the woman, and we must help her all we can. But how else can it be done?"

"That is the question. I see no plan that offers any assurance of success."

"There are only two lines of action," said John Chatfield; "one is that you get your most influential acquaintances to persuade him."

"No one will interfere in a family affair," said little Yang, "particularly where women are concerned."

"Then we shall have to talk to him ourselves."



"He won't see us, and if he should we would get nowhere," said little Yang, decisively.

"It will be better than doing nothing. We can not sit idle and see our work go to pieces."

"We shall probably lose a lot of face and only make things worse."

"We shall have to take the risk," said John Chatfield.

And so it was agreed, although little Yang made it clear that he had no hopes of success and was most reluctant to participate. John Chatfield, however, was a believer in direct action, and little Yang knew he would feel better if all possible measures were taken.

As little Yang had foreseen, when they called at the residence of the leading man a day later, they were told that he was away, although it was obvious that this was not the case, as their cards had been taken in by the servant, who would have said so at once if he really had been out.

They waited in the guest-room, while servants and hangers-on gathered to stare at them, and when word was finally brought as to the absence of the man they sought, none could give any information as to where he had gone or when he would return. John Chatfield sensed little Yang's mounting humiliation and loss of face by the audacious affability of his infrequent remarks, and as soon as he was certain that he would be unable to see the leading man either then or later, he decided on an immediate counterstroke in the form of a statement to the considerable number present, which would not only reach the leading man, but would serve as a public declaration of the position of the church, and which would be all the more effective for being made in the very camp of the enemy. There was no opportunity to consult with little Yang, but he felt that his disapproval of any disregard of the usual polite Chinese conventions would be balanced by his fondness for a contest of wits and particularly for a bold stroke that

carried the war into the enemy's territory even at the risk of overreaching itself.

"Present my compliments to your master," he stated, crisply, rising to go and turning to the elderly head servant who had been refilling their teacups. "I shall not be able to call again in the near future, so I will trouble you with a message. Your master has spread certain reports concerning the church and Yang Siensen. These are utterly false. The church does not propose to stand for any such unfounded charges. Yang Siensen does not propose to stand for them. I will not stand for them. We shall not rest till the matter is cleared up."

Little Yang rose to the occasion without the least hesitation and addressed to the gaping hangers-on a few brief emphatic words by way of enlargement and explanation, and accomplished a most effective exit in his best manner and with great access of face and palpable exaltation of spirit.

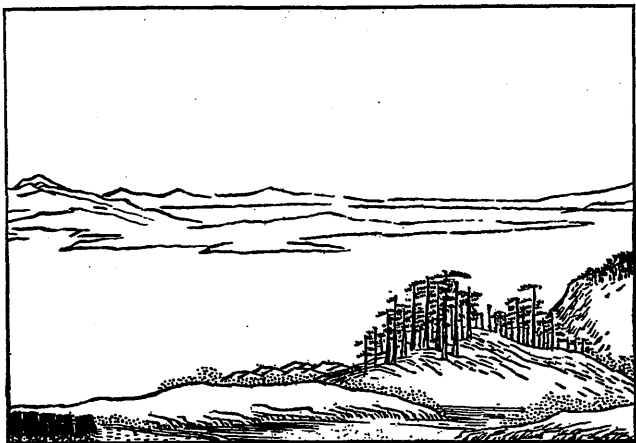
He proceeded at once to visit the members of the enquirers' class and his various acquaintances in the village and inform them of what had been done. All agreed that the church had come out better than even, but it still remained to be seen whether this battle of wits would really get them anywhere.

The situation was suddenly altered a few days later, however, by the return of the little wife. The leading man had come to an agreement with her family to assert himself and protect her from the persecutions of the first wife, and they had put pressure on her to return.

Little Yang at once enlisted the services of his most influential friends to help adjust what was no longer a family matter, but one between the leading man and the church. They so clearly had right on their side, particularly after the return of the little wife, that after several weeks of negotiation the leading man gave in and publicly admitted himself to be in the wrong by giving a feast to little Yang and the leading members of the enquirers' class. Little Yang tactfully made all pos-

sible arrangements to avoid loss of face by the leading man. This courtesy was so much appreciated that it opened the way to a more friendly attitude of the leading man toward the church, and enabled little Yang to put in a good word for the future freedom of the little wife and for her attendance at the enquirers' class.

Thus did the work spread to another village and take root.



## XVI. TEN YEARS AFTER

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He was glad to come at last into the quiet of the room in the hospital that was to be his home for the next few weeks. It had been a long journey. He was tired, and more than a little lonely. Yet he thought gratefully of the courtesies of that last day of travel, of the captain of artillery who had insisted on his taking his seat in the crowded train. He thought of the president of a great Chinese university, whom he had previously met at a national conference, who would not hear of his taking a carriage, and had insisted on driving him to the hospital in his car.

His thoughts were interrupted by the brisk entrance of a dapper young Chinese interne, a product of the medical school of which the hospital was a part, who brought the usual series of record blanks to be filled in. After brief courteous greetings, he produced a fountain pen.

"Name," he asked, then paused to look intently at his patient before putting it down.

"Residence," he enquired next; but when the answer

was given, instead of putting it down, asked a further question.

"Did you ever live in Kan San?"

"Yes," said John Chatfield.

"I thought so," burst out the young interne, rising and coming forward with outstretched hand. "I am your old student, Moh Mih Lan."

The name brought back to the missionary visions of a small boy who had painfully struggled with English grammar in his class in the academy at Kan San, and the young interne lost for the moment his impressive professional manner as they talked over the old days in the school.

Later he returned with a little Chinese nurse to assist in the routine tests, and John Chatfield submitted with a broad grin to the business-like and very adequate thumpings and measurements by his former student, who was once more the serious medical man.

Turning to the little nurse, who was assisting with an air of rapt admiration for the complete bedside manner of the young interne, he asked where she came from.

"Han Mo Hospital," replied the girl.

"Why, that is a hospital of my own mission!" said the delighted patient. "I am among friends."

In spite of weariness he lay awake for a long time that night, thinking how in his own time of need he was in the hands of those he had helped train, and going over the years that had passed, with all their labour and discouragement.

"I have been too impatient," he told himself. "I have been thinking in months and years. I must begin to think in generations."

Then he began to count up what had been accomplished in the years that had elapsed.

"Eight churches in Kan San. Eight thousand in China. Eleven thousand Chinese workers—not all like little Yang, though. One hundred and twenty million Bible

portions distributed in ten years. Gospel probably preached to as many hearers. That ought to begin to make an impression. Even upon the four hundred million.

"Then mission hospitals. Over three hundred of them. Five to eighty thousand treatments annually apiece. Say an average of ten thousand. Three million a year. Thirty million in the ten years."

He was in a mood to value the spirit of a hospital. That was real Christian service.

"And schools. Seven thousand of them. Nearly three hundred high schools. Twenty colleges. And the students grow up. Become doctors, for instance. And ministers."

He thought of some of his more recent Chinese colleagues. Their far better education. Their deeper Christian experience. What a great change from the years when he and little Yang had worked together in Kan San. And now the leadership had been transferred from the missionaries to Chinese. And was in good hands.

"It has been worth it all," he thought as he looked around the dim hospital room. "It is a great adventure."





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